

A manga-style illustration of two young men in formal suits. The man on the left has long, dark hair and is wearing a dark grey suit with a light blue shirt and a dark tie. He is leaning towards the man on the right, who has short, brown hair and is wearing a light grey suit with a light blue shirt and a bright blue tie. They are holding hands, with the man on the left's hand resting on the man on the right's cheek. The background is dark with stylized, swirling white and purple patterns. A red banner is at the bottom.

PARENTAL ADVISORY
EXPLICIT
CONTENT

Blue [Redacted] g

Story and Art by **Shoko Hidaka**

volume 2

A manga-style illustration of two young men in formal attire. The man on the left has long, dark hair and is wearing a dark suit with a light blue shirt and a dark tie. He is leaning towards the man on the right, who has short, dark hair and is wearing a grey suit with a light blue shirt and a bright blue tie. They are holding hands, with the man on the left's hand resting on the man on the right's cheek. The background is dark with stylized, swirling white and purple patterns. A white rectangular box is positioned at the bottom center, partially obscuring the title.

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PARENTAL ADVISORY
EXPLICIT
CONTENT

Blue [redacted] g

Story and Art by **Shoko Hidaka**

volume 2



Blue Morning

"I will serve you my entire life. In exchange, you bring the Kuze family the rank of count or higher." The young viscount Akihito agrees to this condition laid out by his butler Katsuragi, who is thus forced into his arms. But no matter how deep their affair goes, Katsuragi's attitude towards him remains cold. Akihito is plunged into a turmoil of fierce emotions, as frustrated by this unyielding distance as he is driven to violent passion by his butler's cleverness and beauty. The situation reaches a breaking point when master and servant are invited to a party at the Marquise Moriyama's.



Blue Morning

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Blue Morning

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volume 2

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Blue Morning: Scene 6

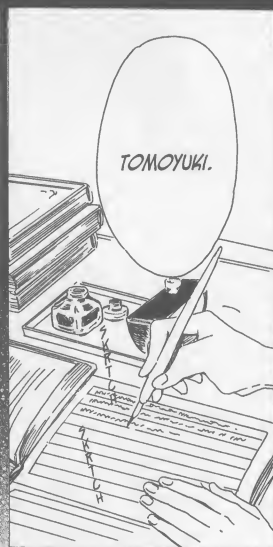


APPARENTLY,
ONE REALLY
DOES NEED TO
START FOREIGN
LANGUAGE
STUDY AT A
YOUNG AGE.

FLIP



YOUR
BRITISH TUTOR
HAD GOOD
THINGS TO SAY
ABOUT YOUR
PRONUNCIATION.



TOMOYUKI.



T
H
U
D



憂
鬱
な
朝



IN FACT,
THE HEIR OF
THIS HOUSE
SHOULD BE
A DIRECT
DESCENDANT
OF MINE.

BLOOD IS
IMPORTANT,
AFTER ALL.

ONE
SHOULDN'T
BE QUICK
TO
DISMISS
IT.



DON'T
YOU
AGREE...

...TOMO-
YUKI?



EXCUSE
ME.



WHY?

AND WITH
ALL THAT
LUGGAGE?

A CAR-
RIAGE?



HE
INTIMATED
THAT YOUR
HEAD IS
SOMEHOW
TOO THICK AND
THAT FINANCES
CAN'T MAKE IT
THROUGH.



THE HOUSE-
BOY AMAMIYA
INFORMED ME
THAT YOU'RE QUITE
STRONG IN MATH
AND LANGUAGES,
BUT POOR IN
READING, THEORY,
AND THE LIKE.



YES,
SIR.

THESE
NEXT.
LEARN
THEM
ALL BY
HEART.



BANG

GASP

...WELL...

AS A
KATSURAGI,
MATH IS
IN YOUR
BLOOD.

YOU HAVE
NO DOUBT
INHERITED
THIS TALENT
OF HIS.

YOUR GRAND-
FATHER SERVED
OUR DOMAIN AS
OUR BUTLER. AFTER
THE RESTORATION,
HE WENT ON TO
FOUND A BANK.



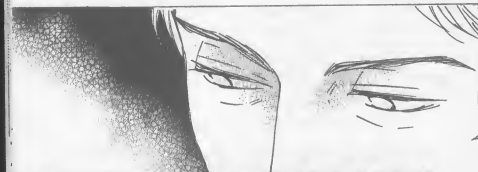
AT BEST,
ALL I CAN DO
IS BUILD MY
PERSONAL
FORTUNE.



...YES,
SIR.

AS LONG AS
WE DO NOT
RETURN TO
THE PAST, ALL
WE CAN DO IS
OBEY THE FATE
DETERMINED
FOR US.

ONE CANNOT
CHANGE THE
STATUS AND
POSITION TO
WHICH ONE IS
DESTINED. WE
HAVE NO POWER
OVER THESE
THINGS.



...DON'T YOU THINK
THERE WILL COME
A TIME WHEN ONE
WILL BE ABLE TO
BUY RANKS?

EVEN IF
IT'S NOT
POSSIBLE
NOW...



YOU...YES,
YOU COULD
CERTAINLY
MAKE MY
DREAMS A
REALITY.

TOMO-
YUKI.



CLAP

ADD
THIS
TO THE
PILE.

READ IT
BEFORE
I GET
BACK.



VERY
WELL.



EVERY-
THING IS
READY
FOR YOU.

YOU
SHOULD
DEPART
SOON.



SOME
WISHES
CANNOT BE
GRANTED NO
MATTER HOW
MUCH ONE
EXCELS.

YES,
SIR.



TOMO-
YUKI.



MASTER TOMO-YUKI?

YOU MUST HAVE HEARD?



...TO SEE THE MISTRESS.

WHY?

IS SHE NOT WELL?



HEARD WHAT?



THIS MORNING ...



I'M ON MY WAY. THE HOUSE IS IN YOUR HANDS.

UNDERSTOOD, SIR.



KIKU?

TAKE CARE IN YOUR TRAVELS, AND RETURN TO US SOON.



HIS LORDSHIP IS ABOUT TO LEAVE FOR THE VILLA IN KAMAKURA....



I WAS SURE TODAY WAS THE DAY WE WERE TO SEE UNCLE KUZE.

WHERE IS THE VISCOUNT GOING?



KIKU?

ALBEIT BRIEFLY, HE IS TO BE MY FATHER. THERE WERE SOME THINGS I WISHED TO ASK PRIOR TO THAT MEETING...





WHAT'S
THAT
YELLOW
THING?

POME-
GRANATE?
NO THANKS.

WHAT
ABOUT
THIS
POME-
GRANATE?

ARE YOU
OFF TO VISIT
SOMEONE
IN THE
HOSPITAL?

THEY'RE HARD TO
EAT. PLUS, WE
HAVE THEM IN OUR
GARDEN. DON'T
BOTTER SELLING
STUFF LIKE THAT.

MAYBE
JUST
PUT IN A
LOT OF
APPLES
INSTEAD.

IT
MIGHT
BE RARE,
BUT IT'S
TOO EXPEN-
SIVE.

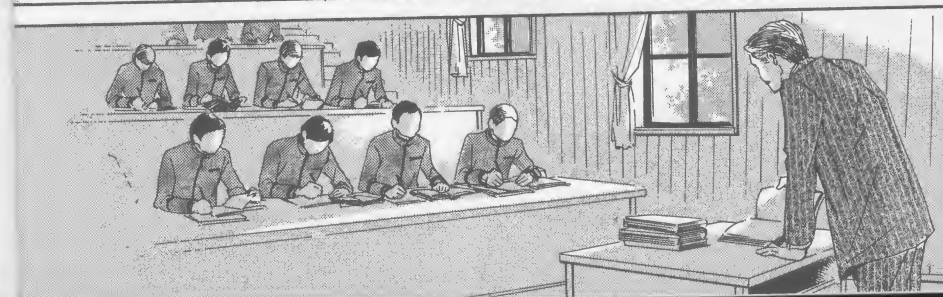
THIS, SIR,
IS CALLED A
"LA FRANCE"
PEAR. IT
IS A RARE
WESTERN
VARIETY.

VERY
GOOD,
SIR.



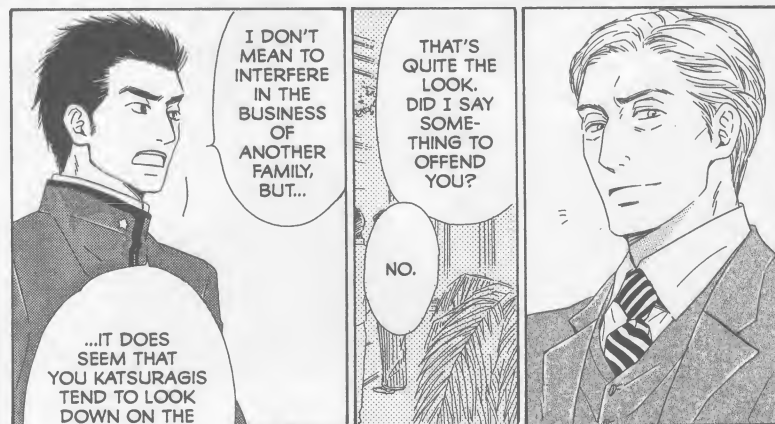
I DON'T
KNOW...

...WHAT I
SHOULD
DO.





LORD AKIHITO IS THE ONLY DIRECT DESCENDENT OF THE KUZE HOUSEHOLD. HE REALLY MUST TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF FOR OUR SAKE.



I DON'T MEAN TO INTERFERE IN THE BUSINESS OF ANOTHER FAMILY, BUT...

THAT'S QUITE THE LOOK. DID I SAY SOMETHING TO OFFEND YOU?

NO.

...IT DOES SEEM THAT YOU KATSURAGIS TEND TO LOOK DOWN ON THE KUZES, EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE JUST A BRANCH OF THEIR MAIN FAMILY.



I'M VISITING MY CLASSMATE KUZE, SO I CAN ONLY GET WHATEVER MY ALLOWANCE WILL BUY.

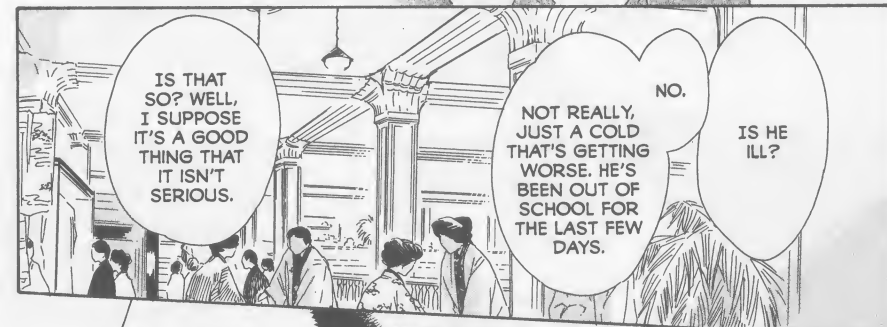
OH, YOU'RE FROM THE KATSURAGI HOUSEHOLD...

VISCOUNT KUZE?

OH, WELL...

I OFTEN MAKE A GIFT OF THEM MYSELF.

THE WESTERN PEARS HERE REALLY ARE SUPERB.

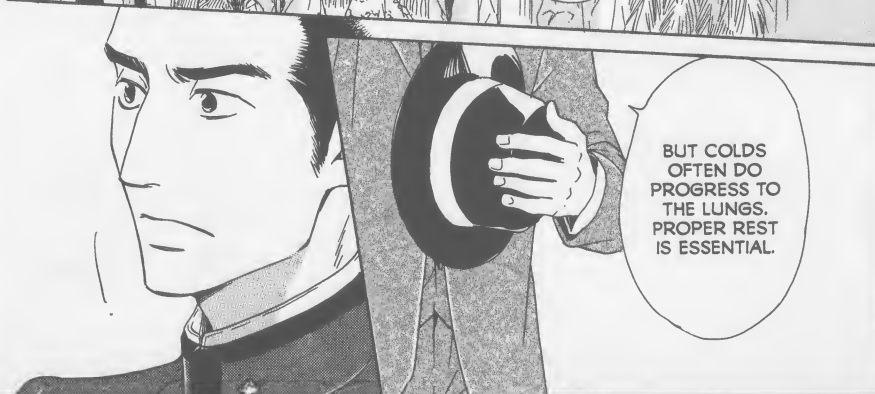


IS THAT SO? WELL, I SUPPOSE IT'S A GOOD THING THAT IT ISN'T SERIOUS.

NOT REALLY, JUST A COLD THAT'S GETTING WORSE. HE'S BEEN OUT OF SCHOOL FOR THE LAST FEW DAYS.

NO.

IS HE ILL?



BUT COLDS OFTEN DO PROGRESS TO THE LUNGS. PROPER REST IS ESSENTIAL.



I
HAVEN'T
READ
THEM.



WHAT
ABOUT
THIS
SHELF?



MASTER
AKIHITO.



OR...
PERHAPS
IT'S
SOME-
THING
ELSE.

IT'S SUCH
A WASTE THAT
YOU DON'T TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF
THIS LIBRARY.
YOU MAKE
YOUR
PREDECESSOR
WEEP.



KATSU-
RAGI...

...HASN'T
CHANGED
AT ALL.



PERHAPS
IT'S NOT
THAT YOU
DON'T
READ, BUT
THAT YOU
CAN'T
READ.



HMPH

NATUR-
ALLY.

AND YOU,
STUDENT
THAT YOU
ARE, DON'T
CARE FOR
THAT?

BY THE
WAY, IT
STARTED
RAINING
EARLIER.
IF YOU'D
LIKE, I'D BE
HAPPY TO
TAKE YOU
OVER TO
THE KUZE
MANOR.

YOUR
FATHER HAS
BEEN VERY
GOOD TO
US.

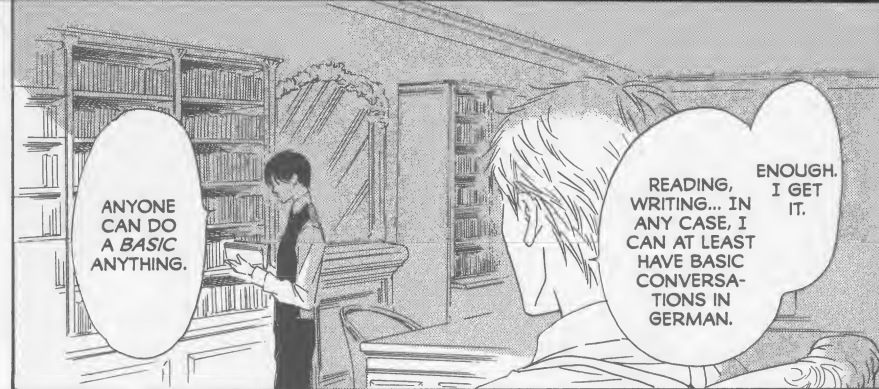




DID YOU GO THROUGH ALL OF THE WESTERN BOOKS IN THIS LIBRARY?



WHAT ABOUT WHEN YOU WERE SEVENTEEN?



ANYONE CAN DO A BASIC ANYTHING.

ENOUGH. I GET IT.
READING, WRITING... IN ANY CASE, I CAN AT LEAST HAVE BASIC CONVERSATIONS IN GERMAN.



KATSURAGI...



HM?



YANK



YOU LIKE TO MAKE YOURSELF THE STANDARD FOR EVERYTHING, DON'T YOU.



NOT ANYONE...

...THAT'S NOT TRUE.



IT'S ALMOST LIKE NOTHING EVER HAPPENED.

I'M NOT EXAGGERATING.

YOU REALLY ARE JUST OF POOR QUALITY.

SAME ATTITUDE AS ALWAYS.

WELL, THEN...

KLATTER



HUH?

JUST
A
TINY
BIT,
BUT...

OR
MAYBE
NOT.

...IT DOES
SEEM
LIKE HE'S
LOOKING
AT ME
MORE
THAN HE
USED TO.

MAYBE
HE HAS
CHANGED,
JUST A
BIT.

ALL
RIGHT,
FINE.

I'LL
GO.



WAS THIS
BOOK
ALWAYS
HERE?

WASN'T
THERE A
POETRY
COLLECTION
HERE?



YOU
WILL
GO TO
SCHOOL
TOMOR-
ROW.

AND
THIS
FEIGNED
ILLNESS
ENDS
TODAY.

SHOVE

PLEASE
BEHAVE
YOUR-
SELF!

AND YOU
WILL STOP
TOUCHING
ME SO
INDISCIM-
INATELY.



I WILL
DO IT.

IF YOU
CONTINUE
TO NEGLECT
YOUR STUDIES
ANY FURTHER,
I'LL HAVE NO
CHOICE BUT
TO INCREASE
THE NUMBER
OF TUTORS
YOU HAVE.

PLEASE
UNDER-
STAND
THIS.

BUT
IT'S
JUST
THE
TWO
OF US
RIGHT
NOW.





HOUSE-BOY?

...WAS ONE BROUGHT IN BY THE HOUSEBOY STUDENT WE USED TO HAVE.

I BELIEVE THIS BOOK...

HE SMILED.



THIS IS THE FIRST I'VE HEARD OF ANY HOUSE-BOY.

HE NEVER SMILES.



HE MAY HAVE BEEN A STUDENT OF THE LAW, BUT HE HAD A TENDENCY TO BE A BIT OF A DREAMER ...

HE ENJOYED POETRY AND THE LIKE VERY MUCH.



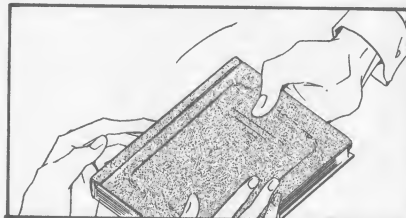
...ALL THE BOOKS UP TO THIS ONE.

I HAVE READ...

HUH?

YOU NEVER TELL ME ANYTHING ABOUT THE PAS-

MASTER AKIHITO.



IT'S TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER BOOKS. WAS THIS FATHER'S TOO?

PLEASE LET ME SEE.



hm

...

!





EVERY-
THING.



KATSU-
RAGI.

STOP.

AKI-

...!



...OBEY
ME,
DIDN'T
YOU?

YOU
SAID
YOU'D...

HA

BITE

HA



"GO
THROUGH
ALL OF
THESE
BOOKS,"
YOU
SAID.



YOU MADE
ME SIT IN
THAT CHAIR
AND PILED
BOOKS IN
FRONT OF
ME.



...THE
DAY YOU
GAVE ME
THE KEY
TO THIS
PLACE.



YOU
WERE
SO
SCARY.



NOT A
SINGLE
THING HAS
ESCAPED
ME.

I
REMEMBER
EVERY-
THING.

EVERYTHING
YOU EVER
SAID.

FORGET
ALL OF
IT...

UNH
...

KATSU-
RAGI...

SHF

NOT
EVEN
LAST
NIGHT...

HA
NO ONE
COMES
WHEN WE'RE
ALONE
TOGETHER.

NO
ONE EVEN
NOTICES.
NO MATTER
HOW MANY
HOURS
GO BY.

I FEEL
LIKE HE'S
CLOSER
TO ME,
EVEN IF
JUST A
LITTLE...

KATSURAGI.

AS
LONG
AS
WE'RE
HERE
LIKE
THIS...

SUCK

...I FEEL
LIKE I
MIGHT BE
ABLE TO
FORGET.

KEDAWKE

HA

HA...

NGH!

HA

THE
STUPID
STRATE-
GIES...

THE
BORING
DEALS...

KATSU-
RAGI.

GET
UNDRESSED.

KLATTER
NG ...



Blue Morning: Scene 7



IN THE
TWENTY
YEARS SINCE
HE ENTERED
THE KUZE
HOUSEHOLD, I
HAVEN'T SEEN
TOMOYUKI
EVEN ONCE.



WHAT?

YOU
HAVEN'T
SEEN
HIM?

VRRR



AN ORDER
FROM THE
HEAD OF A
SAMURAI
FAMILY IS
ABSOLUTE.

SHHHHH

A PROMISE
MADE BY MY
FATHER, YOU
SEE.

...



A COMPLETE
ANACHRONISM,
A SILLY BIT OF
NONSENSE.

ISN'T THAT
WHAT YOU'RE
THINKING?

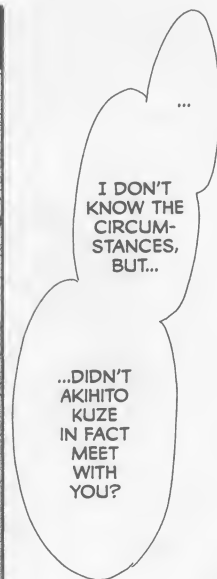


KUZE
OFTEN
TALKS
ABOUT
HOW
POINTLESS
TITLES
AND THE
WHOLE
PEERAGE
SYSTEM
ARE.

THAT
ONE OF
THESE DAYS
THEY WILL
LOSE ALL
MEANING.



AT THE
VERY LEAST,
YOU DON'T
THINK HE'S
CONCERNED
ABOUT THE
BONDS
BETWEEN
YOUR TWO
HOUSES?



...
I DON'T
KNOW THE
CIRCUM-
STANCES,
BUT...

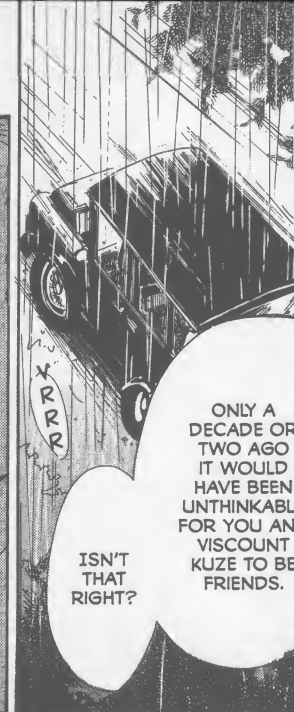
...DIDN'T
AKIHITO
KUZE
IN FACT
MEET
WITH
YOU?



THOSE
REALLY
ARE THE
WORDS OF
A CHILD.



BECAUSE
IT WAS THE
SHOGUNATE
PERIOD,
MY FATHER
REMAINED
BOUND BY
THE FAMILY
RELATIONSHIP.



ISN'T
THAT
RIGHT?

ONLY A
DECADE OR
TWO AGO
IT WOULD
HAVE BEEN
UNTHINKABLE
FOR YOU AND
VISCOUNT
KUZE TO BE
FRIENDS.

AFTER
ALL,
STATUS
AND
POSITION
CHANGE
WITH THE
TIMES.



MOST
LIKELY, HE WILL
CONTINUE
TO KEEP THE
PROMISE HE
MADE WITH
THE OLD LORD
UNTIL HIS
DEATH.

...HIS LOYALTY
TO "LORD
KUZE" IS UN-
WAVERING.

EVEN
NOW,
WHILE
HE'S
LYING
ON
HIS
SICK-
BED...







CLENCH

...THIS
HARD?

KATSURAGI...

KATSU-
RAGI.



WHERE
WAS MY
MISTAKE?

HOW DID
THIS
HAPPEN?

I...



HA

HE'S SO
WARM...

HA

MM!

UNH!



HOW
LONG...

...CAN WE
CONTINUE
ON LIKE
THIS?



UH...

ALWAYS
THIS...

WAS
MASTER
AKIHITO
ALWAYS
THIS
HEAVY?

HAH!

MM!

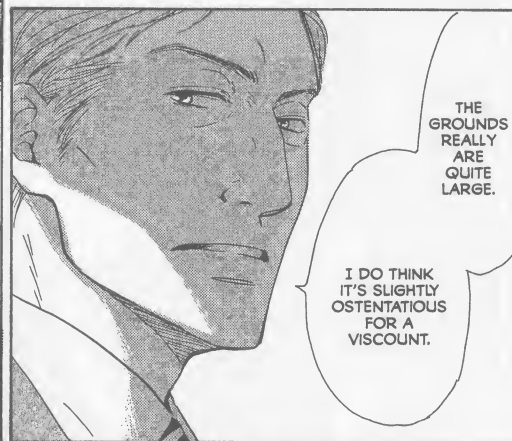
HA

NGH!

NNGH

RATTLE





THE
GROUNDS
REALLY
ARE
QUITE
LARGE.

I DO THINK
IT'S SLIGHTLY
OSTENTATIOUS
FOR A
VISCOUNT.



ANNOY-
ING.

I CAN'T
SEE HIM
DIRECTLY
LIKE THAT.
IT'S
IMPORTANT.

THEY'RE A
BRANCH
OF YOUR
FAMILY,
RIGHT?
JUST GO—

I CAN'T.

WHY? CAN'T
YOU JUST
ASK YOUR
BUTLER TO
DO IT?

I WANT TO
MEET WITH THE
HEAD OF THE
KATSURAGI
FAMILY. CAN YOU
ARRANGE IT FOR
ME?



AND I
THOUGHT
THIS THEN
TOO.



I
LOVE
YOU.

I
REALLY
LOVE
YOU.



WE'LL BE
ARRIVING AT
THE FRONT
GATE
SHORTLY.

HOW
LONG...

...WILL I
CONTINUE
MAKING
THIS
MISTAKE?





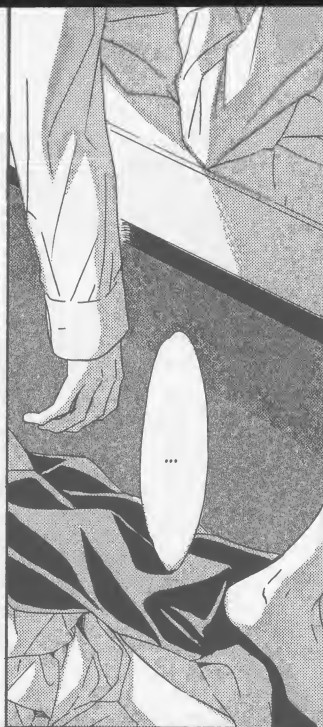
...DON'T
BE A
FOOL.



A SERVANT
CAN'T SHOW
HIS FACE AT
A FORMAL
EVENT.

YOU COULD
GO AS A
REPRESENTA-
TIVE OF THE
KATSURAGI
HOUSEHOLD.

THERE
WON'T BE A
PROBLEM IF YOU
GET AN INVITATION
AS TOMOYUKI
KATSURAGI
INSTEAD OF
AS THE KUZE
BUTLER,
RIGHT?



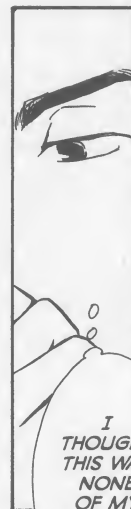
...



UNH!

SHUDDER

KISS



I
THOUGHT
THIS WAS
NONE
OF MY
BUSINESS.
BUT...



THE
YOUNGER
BROTHER
AND
THIS ONE
HERE...

THE
KATSURAGI
FAMILY SEEMS
TO BE MADE
UP OF MEN
WHO ARE FULL
OF THEM-
SELVES.



IS
KUZE THE
SUBORDINATE
HERE OR
SOMETHING?



GLINT

HEY.

CAN YOU
COME WITH
ME TO THE
MORIYAMA
PARTY?



I'LL DO
ANYTHING
YOU
WANT.

CHAK

KATSU-
RAGI.

I'LL
READ
ALL THE
BOOKS
IN HERE.



PLEASE
DO NOT
TALK OF
SUCH
IMPOSSI-
BILITIES.

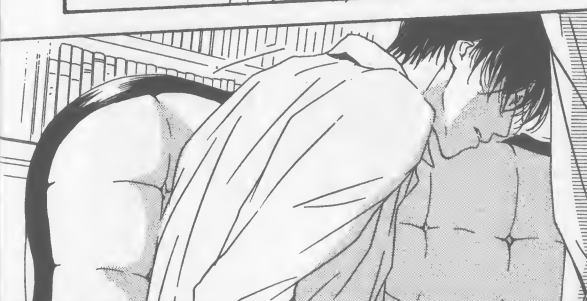
SHOVE!



SLAM

...I LOOK
FORWARD
TO IT.

I'LL DO
ANYTHING.



I MUST
GO. TAMURA
WILL GET
SUSPICIOUS
IF I DON'T
GET BACK
SOON.



PLUS, I
HAVE MY
OWN WORK
TO TAKE
CARE OF.



WHOSE
AUTO-
MOBILE
IS
THAT?

MASTER
KATSU-
RAGI.

EXCUSE
ME, SIR.

VRRRR

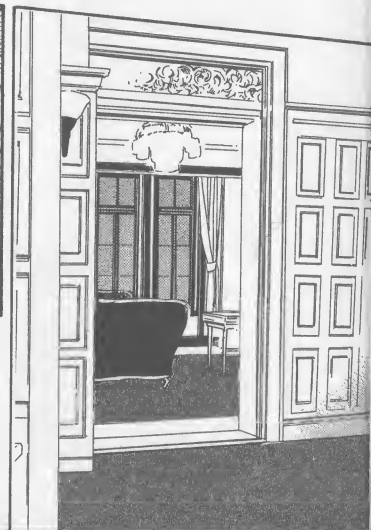
SPLSH
SPLSH

SPLSH
SPLSH



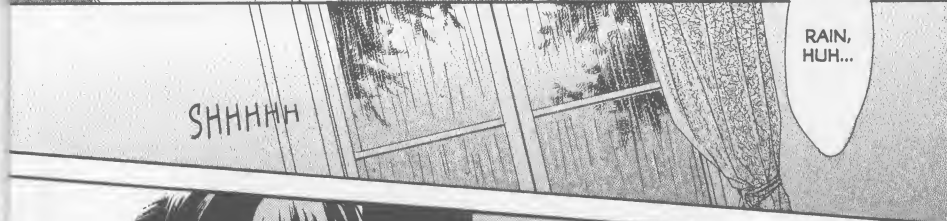
MASTER
ISHIZAKI.

I'M SO
TERRIBLY
SORRY TO
KEEP YOU
WAITING.



AS LONG
AS YOU
STAY WITH
ME.

ANYTHING...



SHHHHH

RAIN.
HUH...



...

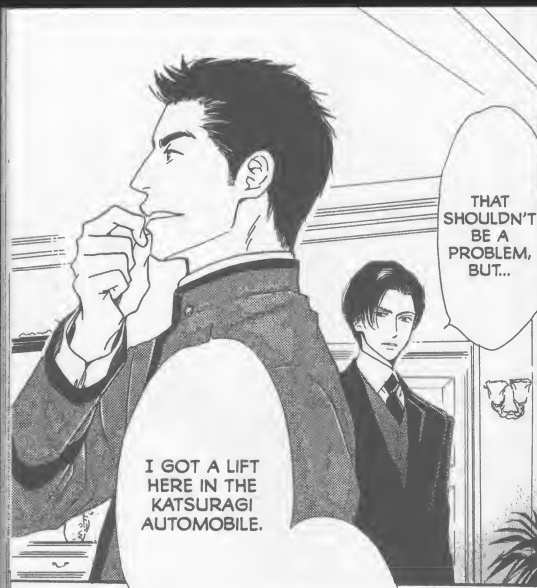
I'LL DO
ANYTHING
YOU WANT.



WIPE



WRING



THAT
SHOULDN'T
BE A
PROBLEM,
BUT...

I GOT A LIFT
HERE IN THE
KATSURAGI
AUTOMOBILE.

WE RAN
INTO EACH
OTHER IN
NIHONBASHI.



I
SHALL.

SORRY TO
ASK, BUT
COULD
YOU GET A
RICKSHAW
TO BRING
ME TO THE
NEAREST
STATION?



!



WHICH
REMINDS
ME.

THE
WESTERN
PEARS IN
THE BASKET
I BROUGHT
AREN'T
FROM ME,
THEY'RE FROM
TAKAYUKI
KATSURAGI.

YOU
SHOULD
SEND
YOUR
THANKS
TOO.



YOU?

WHERE'S
KUZE?

MY LORD
IS NOT
FEELING
HIS BEST
TODAY. HE'S
CURRENTLY
RESTING.

I'M
HERE
IN HIS
PLACE.



I LEFT
A LITTLE
SOMETHING
WITH
TAMURA
FOR KUZE
TO CHEER
HIM UP.

TELL
HIM TO
GET
WELL
SOON.

THEN
I'M
LEAV-
ING.

KLAK



SO I
CAN'T
SEE
HIM?

SO YOU
HAVEN'T MET
WITH ANYONE
FROM THE
KATSURAGI
HOUSEHOLD
IN TWENTY
YEARS?

I'LL
SEE
HIM.

ISHIZAKI'S
THE ONE
PERSON
I'LL SEE.

TAKAYUKI
KATSURAGI
TOLD ME
ON THE WAY
OVER HERE.

KUZE
DIDN'T
SAY
ANY-
THING
ABOUT
IT.

DID MY
BROTHER
SAY THAT?
OR
WAS
IT MY
LORD?

WHAT
EXACTLY
ARE YOU
THINKING?

IT'S
JUST A
"PROMISE,"
IS IT?
SEEMS
STRANGE
THAT AN
AMBITIOUS
MAN LIKE
YOU WOULD
OBEY AN
OLD ORDER
LIKE THAT.

WHAT'S
THAT?

A GIFT
FROM
MASTER
ISHIZAKI.

NO, SIR. I
ACCEPTED IT
FROM HIM
MYSELF ONLY A
MOMENT AGO.
THERE IS NO
MISTAKE.

DID HE GET
THE WRONG
HOUSE OR
SOMETHING?

ISHIZAKI?
PRETTY
EXTRA-
VAGANT.

WELL,
SIR, YOU
SAID YOU
WEREN'T
SEEING
ANYONE,
SO MASTER
KATSURAGI-

YES,
SIR.

WHAT?
ISHIZAKI'S
HERE?

WHY
DIDN'T
YOU
TELL
ME?!

IS HE
IN THE
DRAWING
ROOM
NOW?

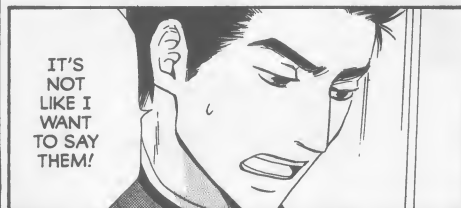


HE'S NOT
IN ANY
POSITION
TO TAKE
RISKS.

HE'S
THE
SOLE
MALE
HEIR
TO THE
KUZE
LINE,
ISN'T HE?



IT PUTS
ME IN A
DIFFICULT
POSITION
WHEN YOU
SAY SUCH
THINGS.

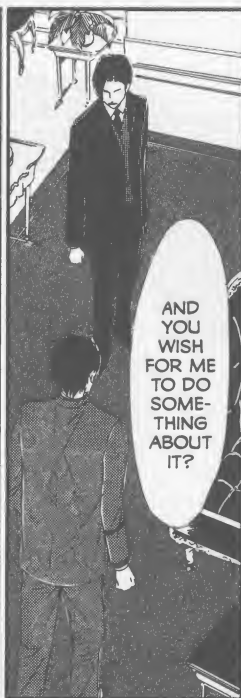


IT'S
NOT
LIKE I
WANT TO
SAY
THEM!



THIS ISN'T
KUZE'S
PROBLEM,
IT'S YOURS.

YOU
DO
UNDER-
STAND,
DON'T
YOU?



AND
YOU
WISH
FOR ME
TO DO
SOME-
THING
ABOUT
IT?



KUZE
SEEMS
TO LIKE
YOU.



KATSU-
RAGI.

I'LL
HAVE A
RICK-
SHAW
READY-



HIS
ATTACHMENT
TO YOU IS
A BIT...
ABNORMAL.

I CAN
TELL JUST
BY
LOOKING
AT HIM.



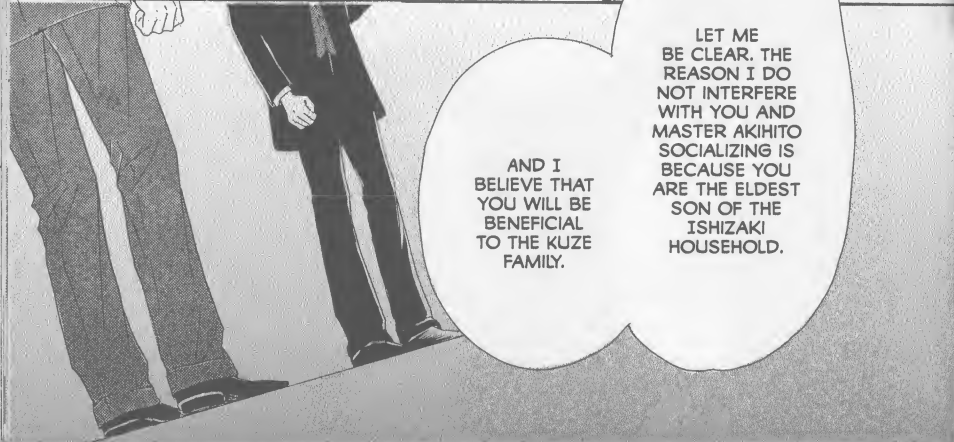
IF
YOU DO
ANYTHING
MORE TO
CONFUSE
HIM—

YOU REALLY
ARE CHILDREN,
AREN'T YOU?



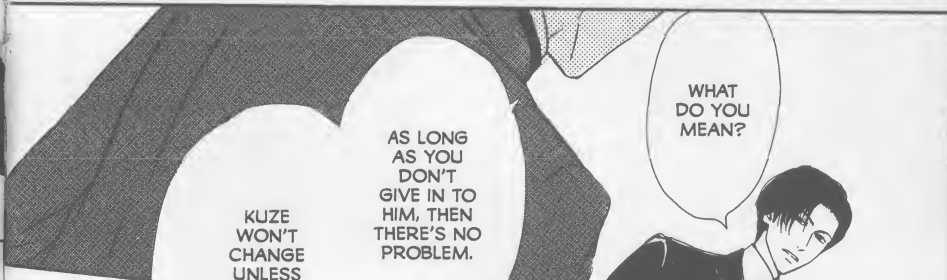
LET ME
BE CLEAR. THE
REASON I DO
NOT INTERFERE
WITH YOU AND
MASTER AKIHITO
SOCIALIZING IS
BECAUSE YOU
ARE THE ELDEST
SON OF THE
ISHIZAKI
HOUSEHOLD.

AND I
BELIEVE THAT
YOU WILL BE
BENEFICIAL
TO THE KUZE
FAMILY.



KATSU-
RAGI.

HOW
DO YOU
FEEL
ABOUT
KUZE?



WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

AS LONG
AS YOU
DON'T
GIVE IN TO
HIM, THEN
THERE'S NO
PROBLEM.

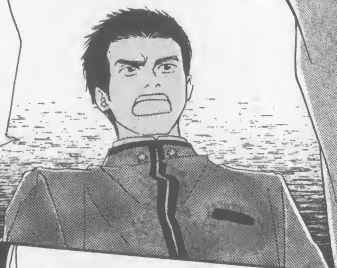
KUZE
WON'T
CHANGE
UNLESS
YOU
CHANGE
FIRST.

IT'S ALL
ABOUT
WHAT
YOU
DECIDE.





AND KUZE'S
FEELINGS FOR
YOU, IS IT THE
SAME THING?



ARE YOU
JUST USING
THEM FOR
YOUR
BENEFIT?



YOU DO
WHAT HE
WANTS AND
IN RETURN
HE'S YOUR
PAWN?

**DON'T BE
ABSURD!**



RATHER
THAN
CONCERNING
YOURSELF
WITH THE
BUSINESS OF
OTHER
FAMILIES...



...PERHAPS IT
WOULD BE BETTER
FOR YOU TO TURN
YOUR FOCUS ON
YOURSELF ALONE
SO THAT YOU MAY
MAINTAIN THE
ISHIZAKI FAMILY
ASSETS THAT
YOUR FATHER HAS
ESTABLISHED.



THERE IS
NOTHING
YOU NEED
WORRY
YOURSELF
OVER.

EVERYTHING I
HAVE DONE IN
BRINGING UP
MASTER AKIHITO
HAS BEEN FOR
THE SAKE OF THE
KUZE FAMILY, AND
I WILL CONTINUE
TO DO SO.



MAKES
SENSE...
YOU'RE ONLY
THINKING OF
THIS FAMILY,
AFTER ALL.



I SEE.
I'M ALSO
NOTHING
MORE THAN
A PAWN
FOR YOUR
USE.



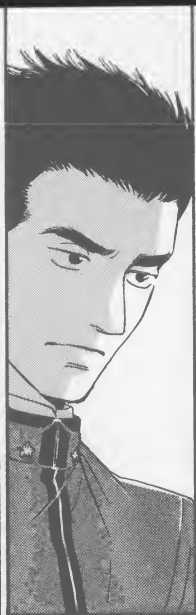
...



NATURALLY.
HE HAS TO
CARRY ON
THE FAMILY
LINE.

SOON
?

BEFORE
HE GOES
ABROAD
?



THE
KUZE
FAMILY
NEEDS
ITS
NEXT
HEIR.



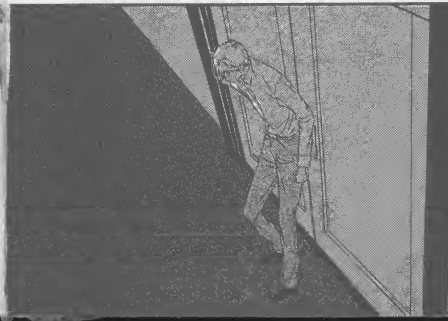
MASTER
AKIHITO WILL
SOON BE
ENGAGED.



!



THIS HAS
NOTHING
TO DO
WITH THE
FEELINGS
OF A
CHILD!



...
AT ANY
RATE...



IT'S CONVENIENT, BUT NOT TOO GOOD IN THE RAIN.

AT LEAST WITH A RICKSHAW, YOU CAN GET AROUND EVEN WHEN IT'S SNOWING.

THE RAILROAD CAR STOPPED SEVERAL TIMES ON THE WAY HERE FROM YOKOHAMA.

IT'S REALLY COMING DOWN.

SHHHHH

YES. AFTER A LONG TIME AWAY IN AMERICA.

HA HA
VERY TRUE, BUT I'M SURPRISED AT HOW MUCH THIS AREA HAS CHANGED FROM THE OLD DAYS.

WOW! THAT'S REALLY SOMETHING!

ARE YOU JUST RETURNING FROM THE WEST, SIR?

WILL IT TAKE LONG TO GET FROM HERE TO VISCOUNT KUZE'S MANOR IN AZABU?

I SUPPOSE IT CAN'T BE HELPED. I HAD WANTED TO GO DIRECTLY AND GIVE MY GREETINGS, BUT PERHAPS ANOTHER DAY.

YES, SIR...

HMM... WELL, IT'S DARK NOW, AND IN THIS RAIN I'M NOT SURE I'LL BE ABLE TO GET MY FOOTING ON THE HILL GOING THERE.



MASTER AKIHITO MUST ALSO BE AWARE OF THIS FACT.

EVERYTHING WE DO IS FOR THE SAKE OF THE KUZE FAMILY.

...
I DECIDED I'D DO ANYTHING.

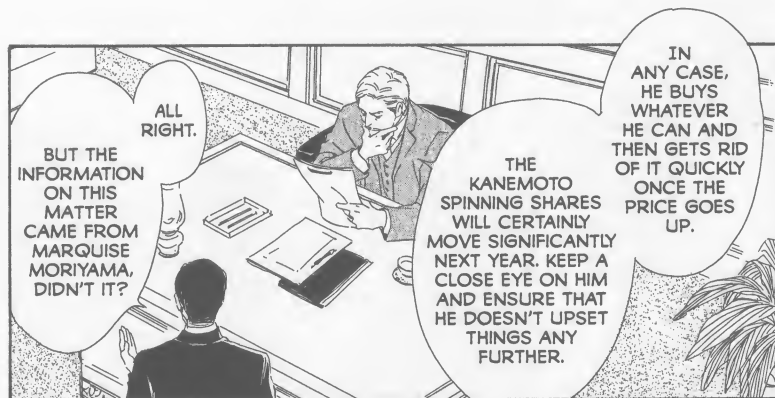
ANYTHING.

AS LONG AS I CAN BE WITH YOU.



Blue Morning: Scene 8





ALL RIGHT.

BUT THE INFORMATION ON THIS MATTER CAME FROM MARQUISE MORIYAMA, DIDN'T IT?

THE KANEMOTO SPINNING SHARES WILL CERTAINLY MOVE SIGNIFICANTLY NEXT YEAR. KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON HIM AND ENSURE THAT HE DOESN'T UPSET THINGS ANY FURTHER.

IN ANY CASE, HE BUYS WHATEVER HE CAN AND THEN GETS RID OF IT QUICKLY ONCE THE PRICE GOES UP.



EXCUSE ME FOR SAYING SO, BUT NO OTHER FAMILY WOULD—

IT'S OBVIOUSLY THE WORK OF TOMOYUKI.

ONLY A SELECT FEW KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT.

THE KANEMOTO-TANAKA ENGAGEMENT HAS STILL NOT BEEN ANNOUNCED.



GULP

BANG

DAMN IT!

NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, KUZE'S PREDECESSOR MADE A KILLING USING THE SAME METHODS...

WHAT?



RUSTLE

VISCOUNT KAMIKI... AND BARON NAGAI.

NO DOUBT THEY'RE THE ONES WHO BOUGHT UP KANEMOTO SPINNING.

MARQUISE MORIYAMA AT THE TOP OF THE LIST.

MARQUESS SAIONJI... COUNT KARASUMA ...



FLAP

NAKAJIMA, HM...

APPARENTLY, IN RECENT YEARS, SOME RATHER LARGE INVESTMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE WITH SEIEMON NAKAJIMA ACTING AS BROKER.

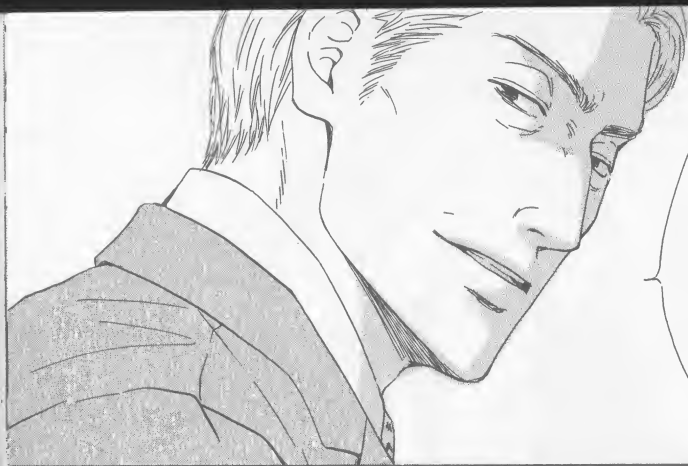
OF COURSE, NONE OF THIS HAS BEEN MADE PUBLIC.

IT TOOK A GOOD DEAL OF WORK TO GET THIS INFORMATION.

HE WAS ORIGINALLY A WELL-KNOWN SPECULATOR, BUT SINCE HE STARTED WORKING AS A BROKER IN KABUTO, HE'S BEEN REMARKABLY CONSPICUOUS.

IT'S QUITE DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE WHAT HE'LL DO.

HE MOVES THOUSANDS OF SHARES ONE DAY, AND THE NEXT HE'S EARNING PROFITS ON SMALLER DEALS...



THIS
WON'T GO
ON FOR
TOO MUCH
LONGER, I
CAN ASSURE
YOU.

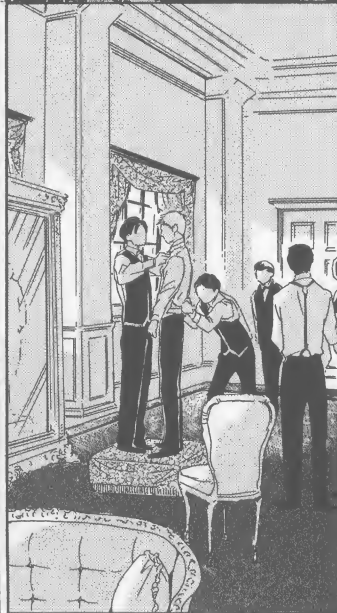


FSH



THE
SLEEVE
IS RIGHT
HERE.

MM...



HE'S
SUPPOSED
TO BE
FOLLOWING
THE ORDERS
OF THE OLD
VISCOUNT
AND
REFRAINING
FROM CONTACT
WITH OUR
FAMILY...



TOMOYUKI'S
CUNNING LIES IN
THE FACT THAT HE
NEVER PUTS THE
KUZE NAME UP
FRONT. HE'S EVEN
USING MARQUISE
MORIYAMA SO
HE CAN RUN
EVERYTHING
BEHIND THE
SCENES.



SEE
WHO
SOON?

I
SUPPOSE
I'LL
NEED TO
SEE HIM
SOON.

KLATTER

OUR
ILLUS-
TRIOUS
FATHER.



...BUT
IT SEEMS
CIRCUMSTANCES
HAVE CHANGED
SINCE HE WAS
PUT IN CHARGE
OF THE YOUNG
LORD.



SURELY
YOU
JEST,
SIR.

IT TRULY IS
DELIGHTFUL
TO SEE THIS
HOUSE
PROSPERING.

WITHOUT
KATSURAGI,
I HAVE NO
DOUBT THIS
MANOR
WOULD'VE
BEEN SOLD
OFF RATHER
QUICKLY.

I WAS
RAISED
WITH
ALMOST
NO
KNOW-
LEDGE
OF THE
WORLD.

I DIDN'T
REALLY
KNOW
MY FATHER.

MY
FATHER
...



THEN
I TOOK
OVER THE
FAMILY
BUSINESS.

I BELIEVE
MY FATHER
STARTED
TAILORING
FOR HIM
WHEN HE
WAS STILL
ATTENDING
THE
ACADEMY.

IS YOUR
PREDECE-
SOR STILL
ALIVE?

NO, SIR. HE
PASSED TEN
YEARS AGO
FROM A
STOMACH
DISEASE.

MASTER
KATSU-
RAGI?

WHEN DID
YOU START
HANDLING
KATSURAGI'S
TAILORING?

...
THAT
REMINDS
ME...



HA
HA
THEN IT
LOOKS LIKE
WE'LL BE
PREPARING
NEW CLOTHES
FOR YOU
AGAIN IN
THE NEAR
FUTURE.

THE MOST
IMPORTANT
THING IS
THAT YOU'RE
HEALTHY.

I GUESS.
I CAN'T
REALLY
TELL.

THOUGH
IT'S TRUE
THAT MY
LEGS HURT
AT NIGHT.

YOU'VE
GROWN
TALLER
AGAIN,
SIR.



BY THE
WAY, I
CAN'T
HELP BUT
NOTICE...

...THAT THE
SHAPE OF
YOUR BACK
IS STARTING
TO RESEMBLE
THAT OF THE
FORMER
VISCOUNT.

YES.

MY
FATHER?



THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.

I HAD THE SUIT MADE IN A HURRY, SO THE FIT MIGHT BE A BIT OFF, BUT WEAR IT ANYWAY.

AN INVITATION TO THE MORIYAMA PARTY AND FORMAL CLOTHES TO WEAR.

YOU CAN TELL BY LOOKING AT IT, CAN'T YOU?



THAT INVITATION WAS PREPARED BY MADAM MORIYAMA HERSELF. YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST GO.



WHY WOULD I GO TO THE MORIYAMAS—

WE TALKED ABOUT IT BEFORE. DIDN'T WE?

IT'S NOT RIDICULOUS.

WHAT IS THIS RIDICULOUSNESS?



...WHAT IS THIS?



THEN I HAVE A REQUEST FOR YOU.



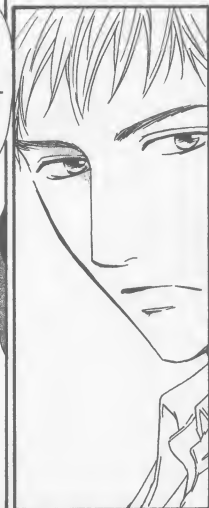
SAY...

YOU KNOW KATSURAGI'S MEASUREMENTS, RIGHT?

YES, SIR. OF COURSE.



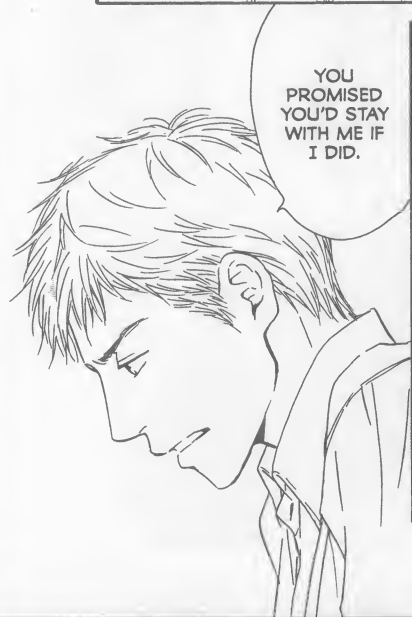
DIDN'T YOU JUST SAY THE OTHER DAY THAT YOU WOULD DO ANYTHING I ASKED?



WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU THINKING?



I KNOW.



YOU PROMISED YOU'D STAY WITH ME IF I DID.



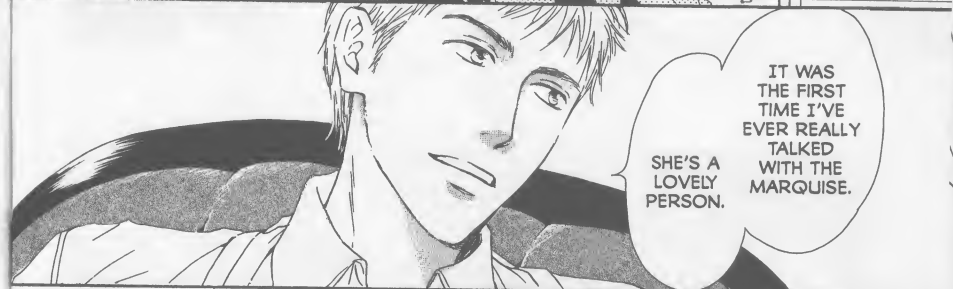
WHICH IS WHY YOU ALSO HAVE TO DO WHAT I ASK.



WHEN I SAID I'D LIKE TO SEE HER RIGHT AWAY, SHE KINDLY MADE THE TIME FOR ME.

I DID.

DID YOU MEET WITH THE MARQUISE?



IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER REALLY TALKED WITH THE MARQUISE. SHE'S A LOVELY PERSON.



WHAT'S THAT LOOK FOR?



...



MY LORD.

MY LORD.

PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME SAY THE SAME THING OVER AND OVER AGAIN. I AM—

DON'T CALL ME "MY LORD."

I WILL NOT BE ATTENDING—

I TOLD YOU NOT TO CALL ME THAT, DIDN'T I?!

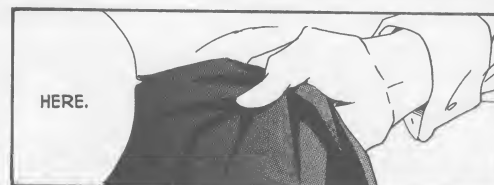
FWUMP



I WENT TO ALL THE TROUBLE OF ORDERING IT. AT LEAST TRY IT ON.



MORE IMPORTANTLY...



HERE.



THE FORMAL SUIT YOU HAVE NOW IS ALREADY OLD, ISN'T IT?

IT'S THE SAME STYLE AS MINE.



TRY IT ON.





AND THAT
YOUR HANDS
HOLDING ME
UP WERE SO
BIG.



KATSURAGI.

HAVE YOU
ALREADY
DECIDED ON
A FIANCÉE
FOR ME?



THE
TAILOR
TOLD
ME...



HE SAID
YOUR SIZE
HAS HARDLY
CHANGED AT
ALL SINCE I
FIRST CAME
HERE.



I REMEMBER
THINKING YOU
WERE SO TALL
WHEN WE
FIRST MET.





I'M ONLY
OBEYING
YOU SO
I CAN BE
WITH
YOU.

YOU'RE THE
SAME. YOU'LL
ONLY STAY WITH
ME AS LONG
AS I WORK
TOWARDS
GETTING
PROMOTED.



YOU'RE
ALWAYS
DECIDING
THINGS
AHEAD OF
ME.

I GUESS
IT'S
NATURAL.



YANK



I'M SURE
YOU'VE ALREADY
THOUGHT OF THIS,
BUT MAKE SURE
YOU PICK MY
FIANCEE FROM
A FAMILY WHO
WILL BE
ADVANTAGEOUS
FOR MY
PROMOTION.

KATSU-
RAGI.



MASTER
AKI-
HITO...



YANK



...
WHAT'S
ALL
THIS
NOW...

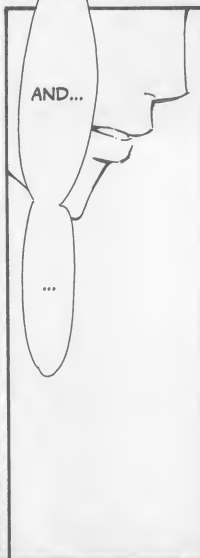
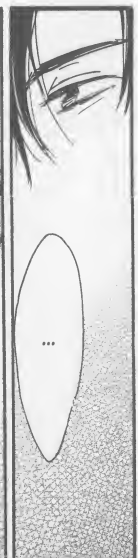
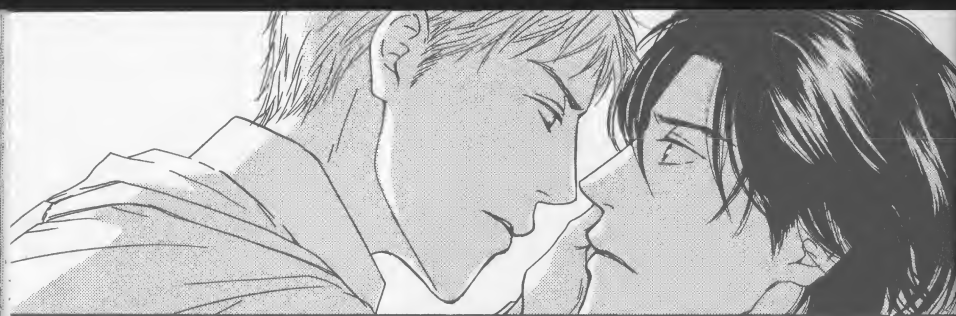


I HAVEN'T
FORGOTTEN
THE DEAL
WE MADE.

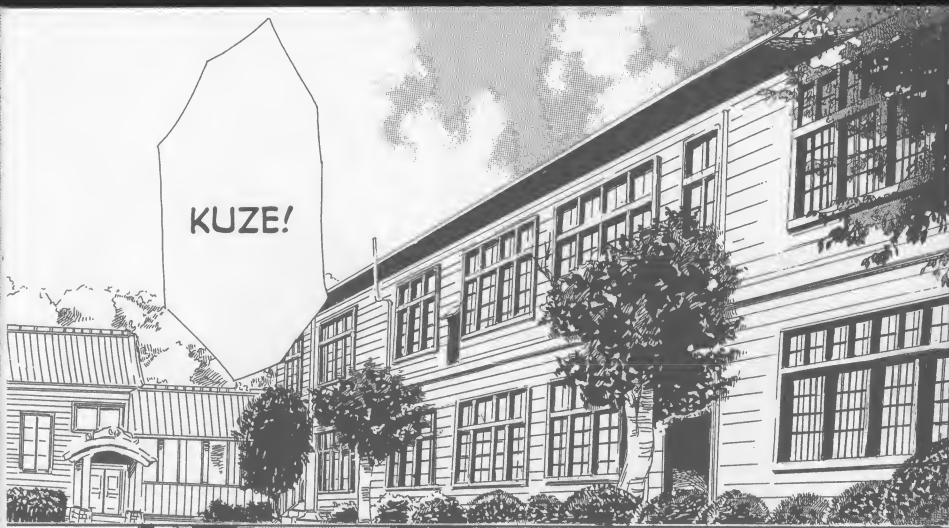


HAVE YOU
FORGOTTEN
YOUR
POSITION AS
MASTER OF
THIS HOUSE?

I
HAVEN'T.



KUZE!



O!!

I
FINALLY
FOUND
YOU.



TO THE
DIRECTOR'S
OFFICE TO
SUBMIT THE
MEDICAL
FORM.

WHERE'D
YOU GO?

YOU
FINALLY COME
BACK TO
SCHOOL AND
THEN YOU
DISAPPEAR.

SLAM



SURPRISING.

ALL
FOR THE
KUZE
FAMILY.



FOR A
MOMENT
...

...HE
SOUNDED
JUST LIKE
HIS
FATHER.





UH, KUZE.

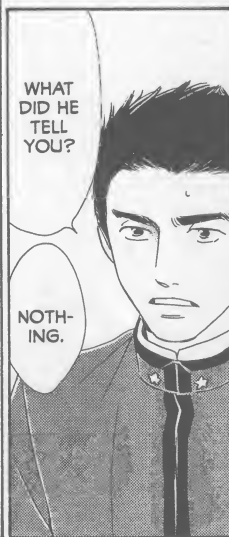
THAT WAS...

UM...

I ALMOST FORGOT. DID YOU HEAR?



I JUST HAPPENED TO OVER-HEAR YOU.



WHAT DID HE TELL YOU?

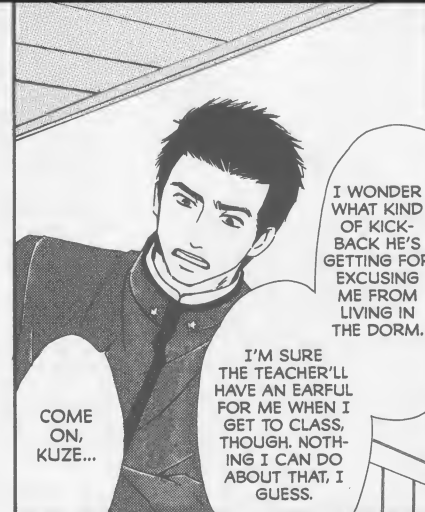
NOTHING.



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

ABOUT KATSURAGI.

YOU CAME TO MY HOUSE, DIDN'T YOU?



COME ON, KUZE...

I WONDER WHAT KIND OF KICK-BACK HE'S GETTING FOR EXCUSING ME FROM LIVING IN THE DORM.

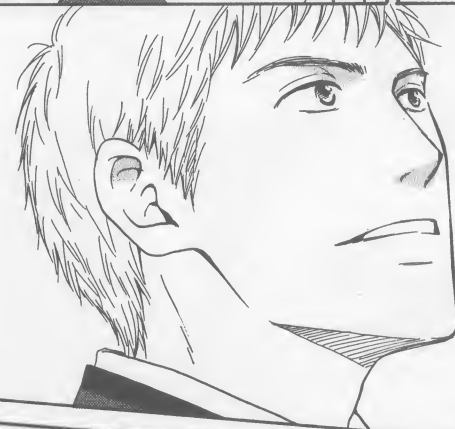
I'M SURE THE TEACHER'LL HAVE AN EARFUL FOR ME WHEN I GET TO CLASS, THOUGH. NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT THAT, I GUESS.



I WAS OUT SICK A LITTLE TOO LONG.

HE KEPT TELLING ME TO BE CAREFUL SO THE COLD WOULDN'T MOVE INTO MY LUNGS.

I DIDN'T GET IN TROUBLE OR ANYTHING.



I WAS LYING ABOUT BEING SICK.

I WAS JUST TAKING SOME TIME OFF, FOOLING AROUND.



THE MASTER OF THE TAILOR SHOP WE DEAL WITH TOLD ME. HE SAYS IT'S INCREDIBLY POPULAR RIGHT NOW.

HUH?

THAT GEISHA HOUSE IN SHINBASHI YOU LIKE TO GO TO... IT'S CALLED "KOFUSA," RIGHT? APPARENTLY, PHOTOS OF IT ARE MAKING THE ROUNDS.



AND WHEN SHE IS, SOME RICH GUY LIKE US WILL BE CERTAIN TO BUY HER OUT OF BONDAGE.

KUZE!

AND SHE'S QUITE A BEAUTY. I'M SURE SHE'LL BE FAMOUS SOON ENOUGH.

PHOTOS...? OF COURSE THEY ARE! THEY RAISED AN APPRENTICE TO BECOME A FULL-FLEDGED GEISHA!



IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING YOU WANT TO SAY TO ME, THEN SAY IT.



JUST
USE
ME.

DROP

AS IF I
CAN DO
SOME-
THING
LIKE
THAT.

I'M
JUST A
STUDENT.



YOU
SHOULD
SLIP SOME
MONEY INTO
THE HANDS
OF THE
MASTER OF
THE GEISHA
HOUSE.

LOCK
HER IN BY
PAYING
FOR HER
PROMOTION
OR
SOMETHING.

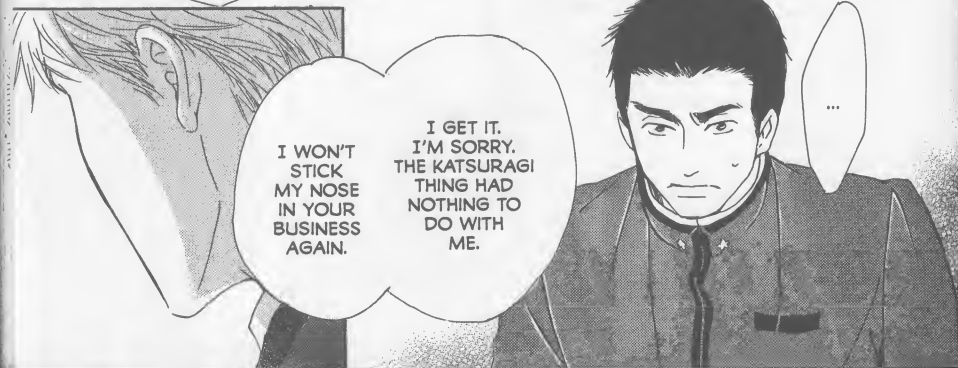


AT ANY RATE,
YOU CAN'T
MAKE A GEISHA
YOUR LEGAL
WIFE, CAN YOU?
GIVE HER A
HOUSE NOW—

STOP!

COME
ON,
KUZE!

FOR THE
AMOUNT YOU'D
NEED TO TAKE
CARE OF THE
WHOLE THING, I
COULD RAISE THE
MONEY WITHOUT
GOING THROUGH
KATSURAGI.



I WON'T
STICK
MY NOSE
IN YOUR
BUSINESS
AGAIN.

I GET IT.
I'M SORRY.
THE KATSURAGI
THING HAD
NOTHING TO
DO WITH
ME.



HEY,
KUZE!
OUTSIDE!
NOW!

YOUR
FATHER TOLD
ME, THAT'S HOW I
KNOW. YOU'VE BEEN
FREQUENTING THE
TEAHOUSE AT
KOFUSA, EVEN
THOUGH YOU'RE
STILL ONLY A STU—

DON'T
TRY TO
HIDE IT.



WHAT
THE
HELL?

DON'T
BRING
THAT
UP AT
SCHOOL!



WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

FOR
INSTANCE
...



SO, WHAT
ARE YOU
GOING TO
DO? IF YOU
REALLY LIKE
HER, YOU'D
BETTER
CONSIDER
YOUR
OPTIONS.



WHAT?
I'M JUST
WORRIED
ABOUT
YOU.

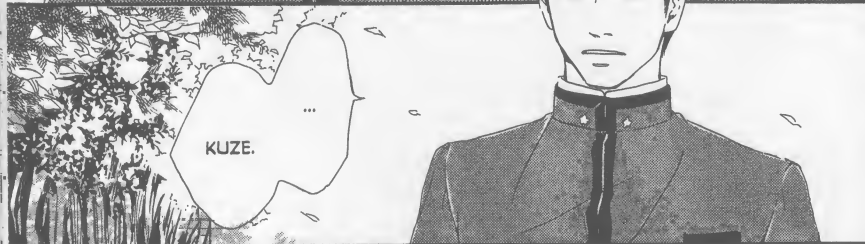


...



...HE
PROBABLY
WANTS TO
HURRY UP AND
GET STARTED
ON THE NEXT
MASTER OF THE
HOUSEHOLD.

SINCE I
DIDN'T TURN
OUT LIKE HE
WANTED...



...
KUZE.



...
MAINTAINING
THE FAMILY IS
THE DUTY OF
THE LEGITIMATE
CHILD, AS THE
HEAD OF THE
FAMILY. THAT'S
BASICALLY
WHY I'M
ALIVE.

HEY... I
DIDN'T-

WHAT
YOU
SAID
WAS
RIGHT.

KATSU-
RAGI'S
RIGHT
TOO.

I USED TO
WANT TO BE
A MAN LIKE
KATSURAGI.



DID
KATSURAGI
TALK TO YOU
ABOUT THE
FIANCEE
THING?

NO.

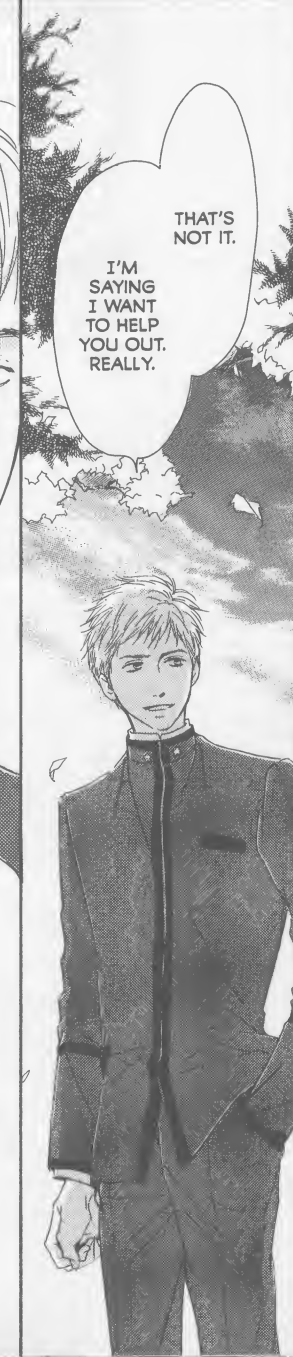


BUT
THINKING
ABOUT IT,
IT JUST
MAKES
SENSE.

HE'S
NEVER
HAD ANY
INTEREST IN
ANYTHING
OTHER THAN
THE KUZE
FAMILY.

I
ACTUALLY
WONDER
WHAT TOOK
HIM SO
LONG.

I JUST
THOUGHT THAT
IF THERE'S A
GIRL YOU LIKE,
YOU SHOULD BE
WITH HER NO
MATTER WHAT
IT TAKES.



THAT'S
NOT IT.

I'M
SAYING
I WANT
TO HELP
YOU OUT.
REALLY.



I CAN'T DO
ANYTHING
ABOUT IT
NOW. I
CAN'T GO
BACK.

SNAP

...
MAYBE HIS
FEELINGS
WOULD
CHANGE.

...
I KNOW
THAT I'M
WEIRD, THAT
I'M MAKING
A MISTAKE.

I
KNOW
THAT,
BUT...

I
THOUGHT
THERE
WASN'T
A SINGLE
THING HE
COULDN'T
DO.

NEVER
GOING
EASY ON
HIMSELF OR
NEGLECTING
HIS WORK.
ALWAYS
BRIMMING
WITH
CONFIDENCE.

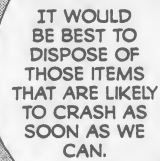
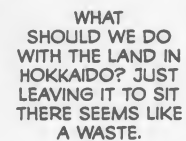
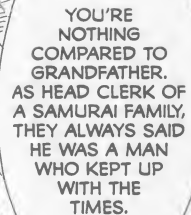
NEVER
LETTING
THAT CRISP
COMPOSURE
SLIP AWAY,
NO MATTER
WHAT'S
HAPPENING.
ALWAYS
LOOKING
TO THE
FUTURE.

I'VE
ALWAYS
LOOKED
UP TO
HIM.

AND
THEN,
MAYBE
...

I THOUGHT
SOMEDAY
HE WOULD
APPROVE
OF ME. AND
THEN...

WITHOUT A
MOTHER OR
A FATHER, I
ONLY EVER
HAD
KATSURAGI
AS A
GUIDE.





EXACTLY
WHOSE SON IS
TOMOYUKI?



FATHER.

I DESPISE
YOUR
FOOLISHNESS
FROM THE
BOTTOM OF
MY HEART.



I'M SERIOUS
ABOUT THE
KOFUSA THING.
IF SOMETHING
HAPPENS, LET
ME HELP YOU.

ISHI-
ZAKI.



OH, AND
THE FRUIT
YOU
BROUGHT
WAS
DELICIOUS.

THANKS.

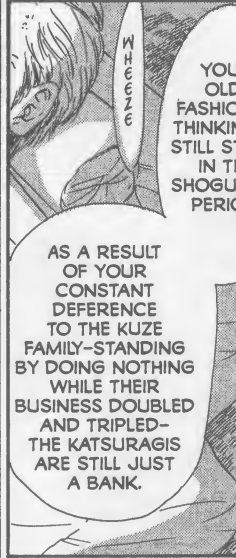


BEFORE
YOU DIE...

...WOULD
YOU
PLEASE TELL
ME ONE
THING?

WHEEZE

WELL...
SAYING
THIS
NOW
CHANGES
NOTHING.



WHEEZE

YOUR
OLD-
FASHIONED
THINKING IS
STILL STUCK
IN THE
SHOGUNATE
PERIOD.

AS A RESULT
OF YOUR
CONSTANT
DEFERENCE
TO THE KUZE
FAMILY-STANDING
BY DOING NOTHING
WHILE THEIR
BUSINESS DOUBLED
AND TRIPLED-
THE KATSURAGIS
ARE STILL JUST
A BANK.

THAT'S
WHAT
CAME TO
MIND, AT
LEAST.

LIKE A
CHILD.

WELL,
ER...

OH!

WHAT
ABOUT
KIKU?
WHAT
HAPPENED
TO HER?

I WAS
VERY
NEARLY
CHASED
OUT OF
HERE.

TAMURA'S
THE ONLY
ONE WHO
KNOWS
ME.

IT
APPEARS
YOU HAVEN'T
CHANGED
A BIT THESE
LAST TEN
YEARS.

TAK

DON'T
YOU
THINK
YOU'RE
SPEAKING
RATHER
LOUDLY?

YOU'RE
PUTTING
THE MAID
IN AN
AWKWARD
POSITION.

MY!

ALL THAT
ASIDE, IT
REALLY
IS ONLY
THE
MAIDS
I DON'T
KNOW!

NO
MATTER
HOW
MANY
YEARS
HAVE
PASSED.

WELL,
WELL!

EVEN
SO,
KATSU-
RAGI...

KUZE
MAY
SAY
THAT,
BUT I
KNOW...

YOU
REALLY ARE
STRANGE,
LITTLE LORD
FAUNTILERGY.

WHAT'S
WITH
THAT
ATTI-
TUDE?

IT'S
ALMOST
LIKE...

...HE WAS
DELIBERATELY
REJECTING
KUZE.

AS IF
HE WAS
TRYING TO
CONVINCE
HIMSELF.

THIS HAS
NOTHING TO
DO WITH THE
FEELINGS OF
A CHILD.

Blue Morning: Scene 9



I,
RINZABURO
AMAMIYA,
HAVE FINALLY
RETURNED TO
JAPAN.



MASTER
KATSU-
RAGI.



YOU ARE
EVER THE
HANDSOME
YOUNG
MAN.

NO, NO. IT'S
WONDERFUL
THAT YOU
STILL LOOK
SO SMART.

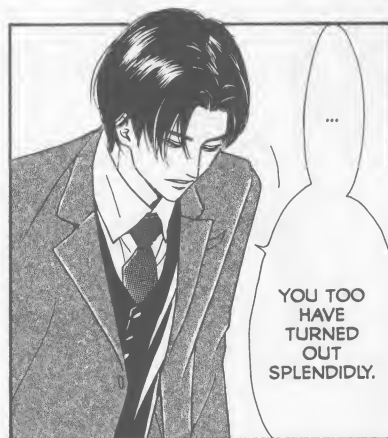


AS THE
FORMER
VISCOUNT
ORDERED...

...I ONLY
EXIST TO
SERVE THE
KUZE FAMILY
AS ITS
BUTLER.

Scene 9 END





...

YOU TOO
HAVE
TURNED
OUT
SPLENDIDLY.



LIKE HIS
PREDECESSOR
BEFORE HIM,
THE CURRENT
VISCOUNT
DOES NOT
REQUIRE
YOUR
ASSISTANCE.

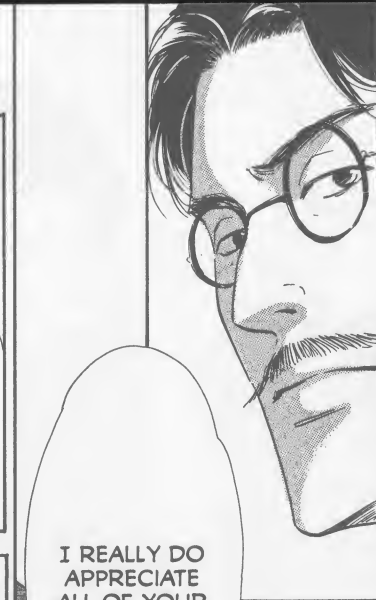
IF
YOU WERE
CONSIDERING
BECOMING
INDEPENDENT
AS A LAWYER,
HE WOULD
OFFER WHAT-
EVER SUPPORT
YOU NEED.

MASTER
KATSU-
RAGI.



YOU
WEREN'T ABLE
TO GO TO
AN IMPERIAL
UNIVERSITY
IN THE END,
WERE YOU?

I REALLY DO
APPRECIATE
ALL OF YOUR
SERVICE.



FWUMP

COME
NOW,
DON'T
SAY THAT.
AND LET'S
NOT
STAND
AND CHAT.
SIT, SIT.

YES?

MR.
AMAMIYA.



THE LADIES
CAN'T KEEP
THEIR HANDS
OFF ME. IT'S
BEEN ROUGH.

I'D
RATHER
NOT.

FIRST
OFF,
HOW
ABOUT
WE
TALK OF
LOVE?

IT'S BEEN
TEN YEARS,
AFTER ALL.
WE HAVE A
MOUNTAIN OF
THINGS
TO DISCUSS.



MASTER
TOMOYUKI.

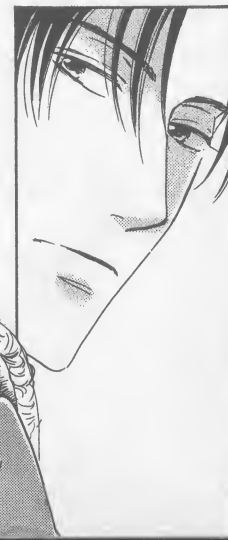
YOU
JUST
NEVER
SHUT
UP.

YOU
REALLY
HAVEN'T
CHANGED
AT ALL.



...YOU'VE BEEN
TAKING CARE
OF THE KUZE
FAMILY ALL BY
YOURSELF.

FOR
OVER
TEN
YEARS...



THAT
MASTER IS
SOMEWHAT
DIFFERENT
THAN I
THOUGHT AT
THE TIME,
BUT...

...REGARD-
LESS,
HIS LAST
WORDS
WERE
HIS LAST
WORDS.

MY
PARENTS
IN THE
COUNTRY
WILL CURSE
ME IF I DO
NOT OBEY
MY
FORMER
DOMAIN
LORD.

AMAMIYA.

...THAT I
SERVE THE
KUZE FAMILY
AS BUTLER
TO THE NEXT
MASTER OF
THIS HOUSE.

THE
OTHER
WAS...

OF
COURSE
I'M
AWARE OF
THAT.

AND THE
SITUATION
NOW IS
DIFFERENT-

BESIDES,
IT'S GOOD
TO TRAVEL
ABROAD
AND EXPAND
ONE'S
HORIZONS.

AND YOU
BEING
YOU, I'M
CERTAIN-

I'M
REALLY
QUITE
BUSY.

IT'S
NOT
TOO
LATE,
YOU
KNOW.

BUT
WHEN I
WAS SO
KINDLY
LOOKED
AFTER AS A
HOUSEBOY
HERE...

...THE
FORMER
VISCOUNT
IMPOSED
TWO DUTIES
UPON ME.

ONE WAS
TO HELP YOU
WITH YOUR
STUDIES,
MASTER
TOMOYUKI.

ALTHOUGH
RIGHT FROM
THE START,
YOU NEVER
HAD ANY
NEED OF MY
ADVICE.

CHAK

IS THAT
NEW?

IT LOOKS
QUITE GOOD
ON YOU,
MASTER
TOMOYUKI.

MASTER
TOMO-
YUKI.

THE
SITUATION IS
DIFFERENT
FROM WHAT
IT WAS
THEN-

...I TOLD
YOU.

I BELIEVE
EVEN NOW THAT
YOU ARE THE
MOST SUITABLE
ONE FOR THIS
HOUSE.

...OF
TURNING
THIS THE
CURRENT
SITUATION
UPSIDE
DOWN...

I WONDER
IF THERE
ISN'T SOME
MEANS...



NO, IT'S PROBABLY NOT POSSIBLE.

TAK



WITH THE MISTRESS SO ILL, MY LORD HAS BEEN SECLUDED AT KAMAKURA.

I KNOW ABOVE ALL THAT I'M TO BE HIS REPRESENTATIVE, BUT I DON'T—



IS IT BECAUSE HE HAS MANY ENEMIES?



YOU WILL, OF COURSE, BE MOVING ON TO AN IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY AFTER YOUR GRADUATION, YES?



I SEE.

GIVE THE MISTRESS MY BEST.



AFTER THAT, IT'S AMERICA IN SUPPORT OF MY LORD...

WILL YOU HEAD ON TO OSAKA AFTER THAT?

FOR THE TIME BEING, I'LL BE WORKING DILIGENTLY AT THE COURT-HOUSE.

YES.



THAT'S RIGHT.

EVEN THOUGH I'LL BE TWENTY NEXT YEAR, IT SEEMS I'M STILL GROWING.

YOU'RE JUST TOO TALL.

YOU STILL HAVE NOTHING ON ME.



WHAT IS IT, AMA-MIYA?

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR HIS LORDSHIP, HE'S AT THE VILLA IN KAMAKURA. HE HASN'T COME BACK YET.

I'M AWARE OF THAT. I'M PLANNING TO GO VISIT HIM NOW.



GOOD-NESS! DID YOU ALSO HAVE YOUR ACADEMY UNIFORM REFITTED?

ISN'T THIS YOUR LAST YEAR THERE?

IN THE FUTURE, SOMEONE WITH INFLUENCE WILL BE NEEDED AS GUARDIAN. BY USING SIMILAR MEANS, OTHER HOUSES TOO WILL—

WHEN YOU SAY "GUARDIAN," DO YOU MEAN FOR YOURSELF?

ALL I NEED TO DO IS MAKE HIM AN ACCOMPLICE.

SHREW AS ALWAYS.

FOR THE YOUNG MASTER.

NO.

...WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?

MASTER TOMOYUKI.

ALTHOUGH THE YOUNG MASTER COULD TAKE AFTER HIS MOTHER AND END UP SICKLY AS WELL.

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT.

HE'S STIRRED UP THE STOCK MARKET SO SPECTACULARLY, IT'S ONLY NATURAL SOME WOULD HATE HIM.

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE MERCHANTS, HE HAS COMPLETELY DAMAGED THEIR REPUTATIONS. AND LOOKING AT THINGS FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE OTHER NOBILITY—

WELL, THEY SAY HE'S... CRASS.

THAT'S WHY I MADE THAT SUGGESTION TO THE MARQUESS.

THE DISTINGUISHED FAMILIES SAY HE COPIES THE NOUVEAU RICHE IN FASHION NOW.

I SAID I WAS GETTING READY TO GO TO KABUTO NOW AND THAT PERHAPS HE COULD JOIN ME.



SHUT UP,
AMAMIYA.

HE SHOULD
BE THINKING
OF THE WORST
CASE AS WELL.
IN THE FUTURE,
YOU REALLY—



DON'T
SAY
ANYTHING
MORE.



WHICH IS
EXACTLY WHY
HE TOOK YOU
IN—YOU WHO
EXCELS IN ALL
THINGS.



MY LORD
IS THE
ONE WHO
MAKES
THAT
DECISION.

IT'S NOT
UP TO
ME TO
DECIDE.

IN FACT,
YOU DO
SEEM
TO BE
ENJOYING
YOURSELF.

I BELIEVE
EVEN NOW
THAT YOU ARE
MOST SUITED
FOR THE
KUZE LINE.



HE HATES HIS
ILLEGITIMATE
YOUNGER
BROTHER WITH
A PASSION.

UNDER NO
CIRCUMSTANCES
DOES HE WANT
TO ALLOW HIS
BROTHER TO
SUCCEED
HIM.

LORD KUZE AND
HIS HATRED OF
CONCUBINES...

DO YOU
REALLY
BELIEVE
THAT?

WHATEVER I
BELIEVE, THE
HEIR HAS
ALREADY BEEN
BORN.

THERE'S
NO
ROOM
FOR ME
NOW.



MASTER
KATSU-
RAGI.

MY LORD
SHOULD BE
RETURNING
VERY
SHORTLY.

I NEVER
INTENDED
TO
DECEIVE
YOU.



THERE
ARE...

...SOME
THINGS THAT
YOU DON'T
KNOW.



TOMOYUKI.

YOU
KNEW
FROM THE
START...

YOU
KNEW,
DIDN'T
YOU?

NO...
"KATSURAGI."



YOU
REALLY DO
RESEMBLE
MASTER
AKINAO.

ALMOST...

TAK

...LIKE A
CURSE.



WELCOME
HOME, SIR.



THAT'S
TRUE.

IT
SEEMS
LIFE HAS
BEEN
GOOD
TO HIM.

DURING THE
TIME HE HAS
BEEN AWAY
FROM US,
MR. AMAMIYA
HAS BECOME
QUITE A
WONDERFUL
MAN, HASN'T
HE?

AND
HE'S AS
TALKATIVE
AS
ALWAYS...

AND
ME...

I HAD
NOTHING
TO TELL
HIM.

FOR OVER TEN
YEARS, YOU'VE
BEEN TAKING
CARE OF THE
KUZE FAMILY ALL
BY YOURSELF.



FOR
TWENTY
YEARS, I
HAVE LIVED
FOR THE
SAKE OF
THE KUZE
FAMILY...

...WITH THE
SOLE PURPOSE
OF ACCOM-
PLISHING WITH
MY OWN HANDS
WHAT THE FOR-
MER VISCOUNT
COULD NOT DO
RIGHT UP TO
THE END.



AT ANY RATE, MY LORD, I WOULD NOT DO ANYTHING AT THIS STAGE TO INCONVENIENCE MARQUISE MORIYAMA.



AGAIN, THIS IS NON-SENSE.

THAT'S AN ORDER!



IT'S MAR-QUISE MORIYAMA.

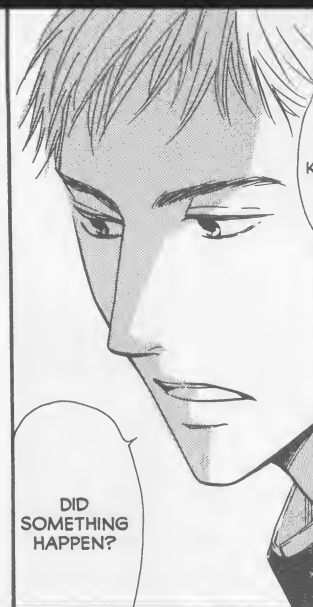
AND IT HAS BEEN SOME TIME SINCE I'VE SEEN MADAM KAYOKO.



THAT IS NOT A MATTER FOR WHICH I WILL BE TAKING ORDERS, MY LORD.



AND I DON'T WISH FOR YOU TO SPEND TOO MUCH TIME TALKING WITH MASTER SHIGEYUKI SAIONJI. THE SAME GOES FOR MARQUISE MORIYAMA AS WELL.



KATSURAGI?

DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?



SSF



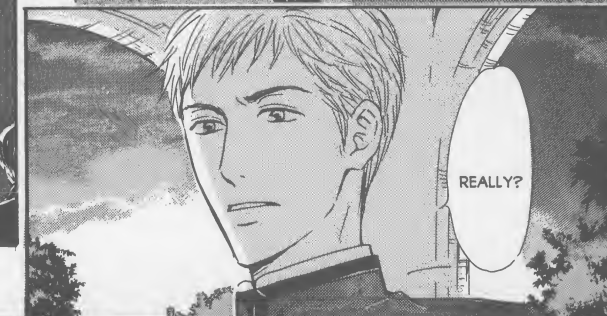
TONIGHT IS THE MORIYAMA PARTY.

YOU AND I WILL GO IN THE SAME CARRIAGE.

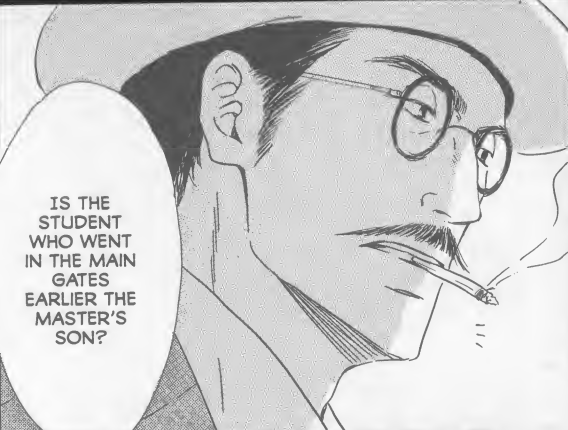


NO.

NOTHING.



REALLY?



IS THE STUDENT WHO WENT IN THE MAIN GATES EARLIER THE MASTER'S SON?

MY!

THAT YOUNG AND IN A POSITION LIKE THAT.

NO, NO! HE'S THE MASTER.

HE RECEIVED HIS TITLE WHEN HE WAS TEN.

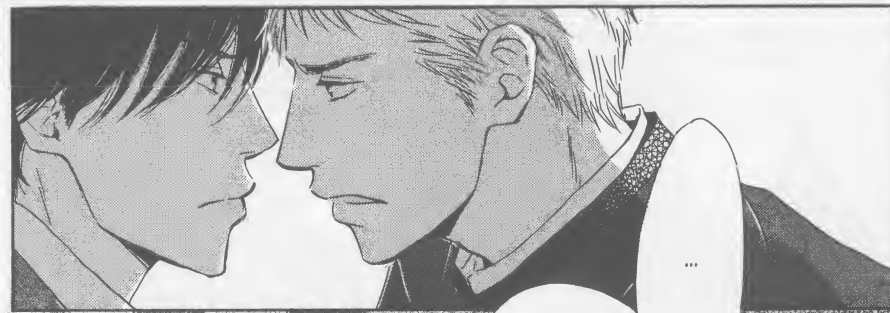
VIS-COUNT AKIHITO KUZE.

EVERYONE WAS QUITE PERPLEXED, SAYING HE WAS TOO YOUNG TO BE MASTER.

I SUPPOSE AT THE TIME HE WAS A CHILD WHO KNEW NOTHING ABOUT NOTHING.



KATSURAGI.



...
DIDN'T I TELL YOU NOT TO CALL ME "MY LORD"?



SHUT UP,
AMAMIYA.

THE
CURRENT
VISCOUNT
IS STILL
ONLY
SEVENTEEN,
CORRECT?

EVERYONE
KNOWS THAT
YOU ARE THE
ONE WITH ALL
THE AUTHORITY
IN THIS
HOUSEHOLD.

WE LIVE IN
A TIME WHEN
A FINANCIER
FROM HUMBLE
BEGINNINGS CAN
BE BESTOWED
WITH A TITLE.
WE'LL THINK OF
SOMETHING,
REGARDLESS OF
THE MATRILINEAL
LINE OR THE
BRANCH FAMILY
ISSUES.

RATHER
THAN
OBEYING A
CHILD, YOU
SHOULD—

BANG



I BELIEVE
I TOLD
YOU TO
SHUT UP.



ARE YOU
SURE?

NOT BACK TO
THE HOTEL IN
TSUKIJI?

I
CHANGED
MY MIND.
HURRY,
HURRY.

IT'LL TAKE
QUITE SOME
TIME FROM
HERE.

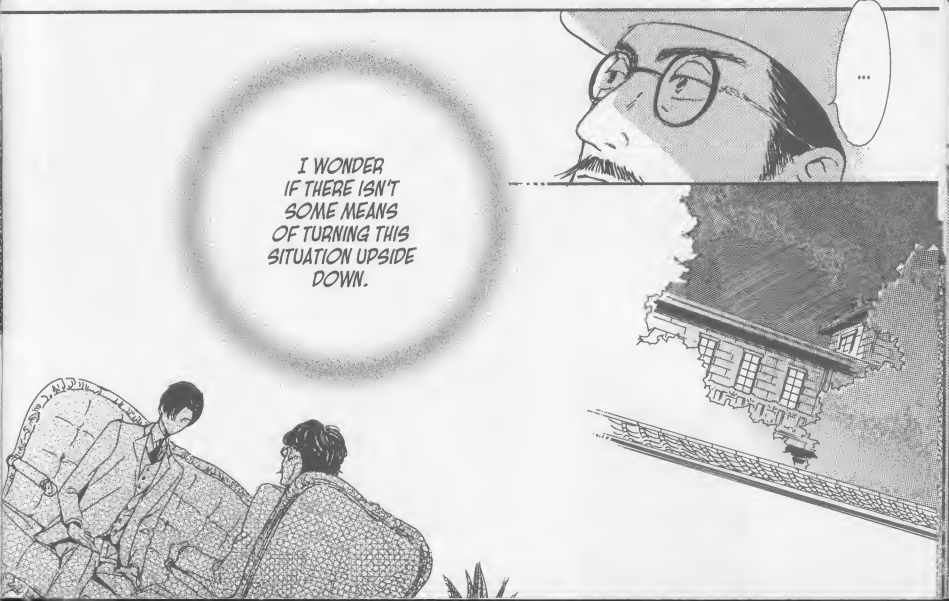
HEAD
TOWARDS
NEGISHI.

I'VE
SEEN
ENOUGH.

WE
CAN
GO
NOW.

RIGHT
FROM THE
START, HIS
GUARDIAN
HAD TO BE
A CAPABLE
MEMBER OF
THE HOUSE-
HOLD.

THERE'S
NO END
TO THE
NUMBERS OF
THE PEERAGE
FALLING INTO
RUIN BECAUSE
THEY ARE
INCAPABLE
OF PROPERLY
MANAGING
THEIR OWN
ASSETS.



I WONDER
IF THERE ISN'T
SOME MEANS
OF TURNING THIS
SITUATION UPSIDE
DOWN.



"LET'S PEER
THROUGH OUR
LOOKING GLASS
TO FIND OUT
WHO MAY BE
ATTENDING THE
FESTIVITIES AT
HER LADYSHIP
THE MARQUISE'S
ESTATE
TONIGHT."

HOW'S
THAT
FOR A
START?

COULD
WORK.



OH!

IS
THAT THE
KANEKO
CARRIAGE
ARRIVING?

IT WAS
COUNT
KARASU-
MA WHO
WENT IN
EARLIER.

QUITE THE
GATHERING
OF NOBLES,
MINISTERS,
AND INDUS-
TRIALISTS.

YOU'RE A
REPORTER.
TRY A
LITTLE
HARDER.

CLICHÉS
WORK
WELL
WITH THE
MASSES.

OUR
PAPER'S
THE SAME
WAY.



DO NOT
DISRESPECT
MASTER
AKIHIRO ANY
FURTHER.



...

IN
THESE
PAST
TEN
YEARS...

...WHAT
EXACTLY HAS
HAPPENED...?



CHATTER

YES, BUT EVEN MARQUESS MORIYAMA HAS SEVERAL HOUSES FOR HIS MISTRESSES WITHIN THE MANOR GROUNDS.

HE'S LADY MORIYAMA'S LOVER, ISN'T HE? REALLY, NOW.

CHATTER

RUMOR HAS IT THE ONE WHO ARRANGED THIS WHOLE ENGAGEMENT WAS THE THIRD SON OF THE KATSURAGI HOUSEHOLD.

WHO? TOMOYUKI KATSURAGI?

WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE GOOSE IS GOOD FOR THE GANDER, I SUPPOSE.



VISCOUNT KUZE AND TOMOYUKI KATSURAGI.

LOOK.

SPEAK OF THE DEVIL.

WHISPER



NOW WHO?

THAT'S THE KUZE FAMILY CREST.

OH, THE STUDENT VISCOUNT?

I SUPPOSE BECAUSE MARQUISE MORIYAMA IS THE KUZE FAMILY GUARDIAN.

HERE COMES ANOTHER ONE.

THIS IS THE LAP OF LUXURY, ALL RIGHT.



BUT TO BETROTH ONESELF TO AN ARRIVISTE NEW NOBLE? THE SAIONJI HOUSE HAS TRULY FALLEN.

THEY'RE ALREADY POOR. I SUPPOSE IT'S BETTER THAN RELINQUISHING THEIR TITLE.



MY LORDS, WHAT HAS YOU IN SUCH AN INTENSE DISCUSSION SUCH AS THIS ONE?

AND KUZE? WELL, GIVEN HIS SOCIAL STANDING AS A LOW-RANKING FEUDAL LORD, IT'S AWFULLY BRAZEN OF HIM TO-

GRUMBLE
GRUMBLE
GRUMBLE

I'M HERE TODAY AS A REPRESENTATIVE FOR MY BROTHER.

IT'S BEEN QUITE SOME TIME SINCE WE LAST SAW ONE ANOTHER.



OH, I DON'T KNOW.

I PREFER TO LEAVE THAT SORT OF BUSINESS TO MY BROTHERS.

AND YOU, COUNT TACHIBANA... HOW IS YOUR HOKKAIDO FARMING BUSINESS COMING ALONG?

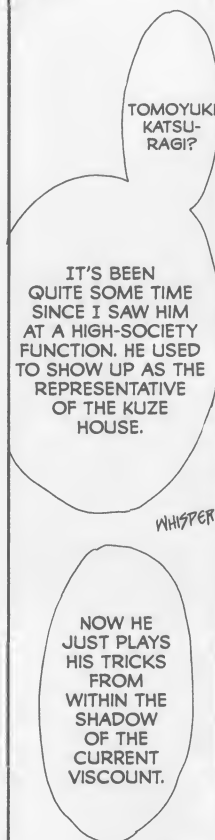


A REPRESENTATIVE?

SO MERELY INCREASING THE KUZE WEALTH IS NOT ENOUGH FOR YOU?

PLANNING TO SHORE UP YOUR OWN FAMILY'S RESERVES AS WELL?

HAPH



TOMOYUKI KATSURAGI?

IT'S BEEN QUITE SOME TIME SINCE I SAW HIM AT A HIGH-SOCIETY FUNCTION. HE USED TO SHOW UP AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KUZE HOUSE.

WHISPER

NOW HE JUST PLAYS HIS TRICKS FROM WITHIN THE SHADOW OF THE CURRENT VISCOUNT.

WHISPER

WHISPER





HOW
SURPRI-
SING.

HE
SEEMS
TO BE
CARRYING
HIMSELF
QUITE
WELL.

NOW
THAT I
THINK
OF IT...

LORD
IKEDA, THE
FOREIGN
MINISTER...

...THIS IS THE
FIRST TIME
I'VE EVER
SEEN MASTER
AKIHITO IN
THIS KIND OF
SETTING.

AND I BELIEVE
NEXT TO HIM
IS LORD
INOUE, THE MAN
WHO HOLDS THE
POWER TO DECIDE
WHO STUDIES
ABROAD AT THE
GOVERNMENT'S
EXPENSE.



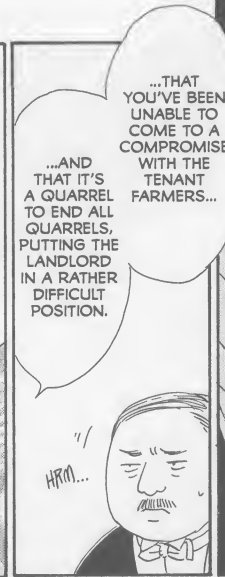
IT MIGHT BE
OF INTEREST
TO YOU THAT
I'VE COME
UPON SOME
INFORMATION
REGARDING
SOME
AVAILABLE
LAND THAT I
WOULDN'T
MIND SHARING
WITH YOU,
MY LORD.

IT SEEMS
RIGHT NOW
THAT THE
BEST LAND
IN TOWN IS
AVAILABLE
AT AN
INCREDIBLE
PRICE.

WHISPER

WHISPER
THE
NUMBER
OF TENANT
FARMERS
IS ALSO
SIGNIFICANTLY
LARGER.

WHISPER



...THAT
YOU'VE BEEN
UNABLE TO
COME TO A
COMPROMISE
WITH THE
TENANT
FARMERS...

...AND
THAT IT'S
A QUARREL
TO END ALL
QUARRELS,
PUTTING THE
LANDLORD
IN A RATHER
DIFFICULT
POSITION.

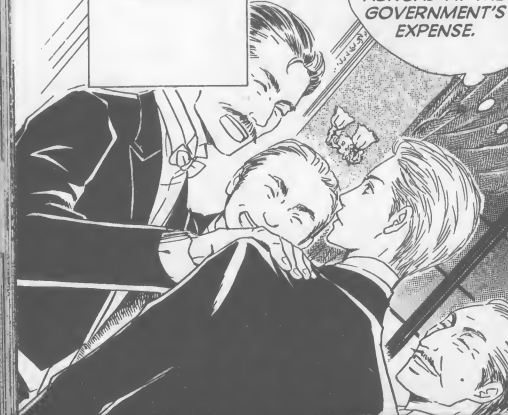
HA...



I'VE
JUST
HEARD
FROM A
CERTAIN
SOMEONE...



R...
REALLY?!





WHAT'S
GOING
ON OVER
THERE?

HA
HA
HA!

BLAH,
BLAH...

YADA,
YADA...

WHAT'S
THE POINT
OF COMING
TOGETHER
IF HE'S NOT
WITH ME?

JUST
WHEN I WAS
WONDERING
WHERE HE'D
GONE OFF
TO...



KATSURAGI
NEVER
CHANGES,
DOES HE?



NO.
NO.

NOT TO
WORRY.

I'M
SORRY TO
DISTURB
YOU,
MINISTER.

LORD KUZE,
THANK YOU
SO MUCH
FOR YOUR
WONDERFUL
WORDS
EARLIER...

WELL, IF
IT ISN'T
LORD
SAIONJI.



MASTER
KATSURAGI?



...



YES.

I
HAVEN'T
SEEN YOU
IN QUITE
SOME TIME.

I'M HERE
AS MY
BROTHER'S
REPRESENTATIVE.

OH!

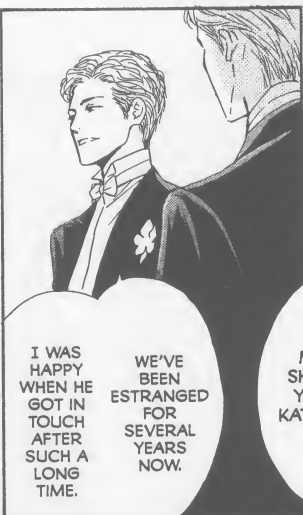
IS IT
REALLY YOU,
MASTER
KATSURAGI?

OH,
MY!

YES?

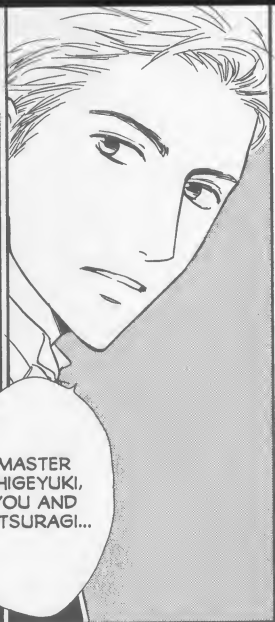


AND THEN HE
TALKED TO ME
ABOUT THE
ENGAGEMENT.



I WAS
HAPPY
WHEN HE
GOT IN
TOUCH
AFTER
SUCH A
LONG
TIME.

WE'VE
BEEN
ESTRANGED
FOR
SEVERAL
YEARS
NOW.



MASTER
SHIGEYUKI,
YOU AND
KATSURAGI...



KATSURAGI
TOOK CARE
OF OUR
DEBTS AND
EVEN LEFT
US WITH A
FINANCIAL
CUSHION.

THEY
REALLY
HAD NO
CHOICE,
THOUGH.

IT WAS
ALL TO
PROTECT
THE
SAIONJI
HOME,
AFTER
ALL.



IN THE
END, MY
PIGHEADED
PARENTS LOST
OUT TO
KATSURAGI
AND
MONEY.

I'M SURE
YOU KNOW
THIS TOO, BUT
WE SAIONJIS
ARE A NOBLE
FAMILY IN
NAME ONLY.
FINANCIALY,
WE'RE IN
RATHER DIRE
STRAITS.



IN ANY
CASE, THE
ONLY REASON
EVERYONE'S
HERE IS
TO VISIT
MARQUISE
MORIYAMA.

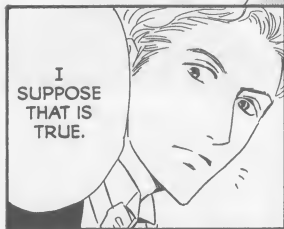
IT'S FINE.
NO NEED
TO BE SO
FORMAL.



MY
SINCEREST
CONGRAT-
ULATIONS
ON YOUR
ENGAGEMENT.

ALLOW
ME TO
SAY IT
AGAIN.

I'M
NOT
EVEN IN
THEIR LINE
OF
SIGHT.



I
SUPPOSE
THAT IS
TRUE.



ROOMS
LIGHT
UP
WHEN
HE
ENTERS.

...AS
ALWAYS,
KATSURAGI
DRAWS
ATTENTION.



YOU'VE
NEVER
LIKED ME,
HAVE
YOU?

HEH





VISCOUNT
KUZE?

I AM. I
APOLO-
GIZE.

MY
MASTER
STOLE MY
ATTENTION.

HE'S
BECOMING
QUITE THE
FINE LORD.



MASTER
KATSU-
RAGI?

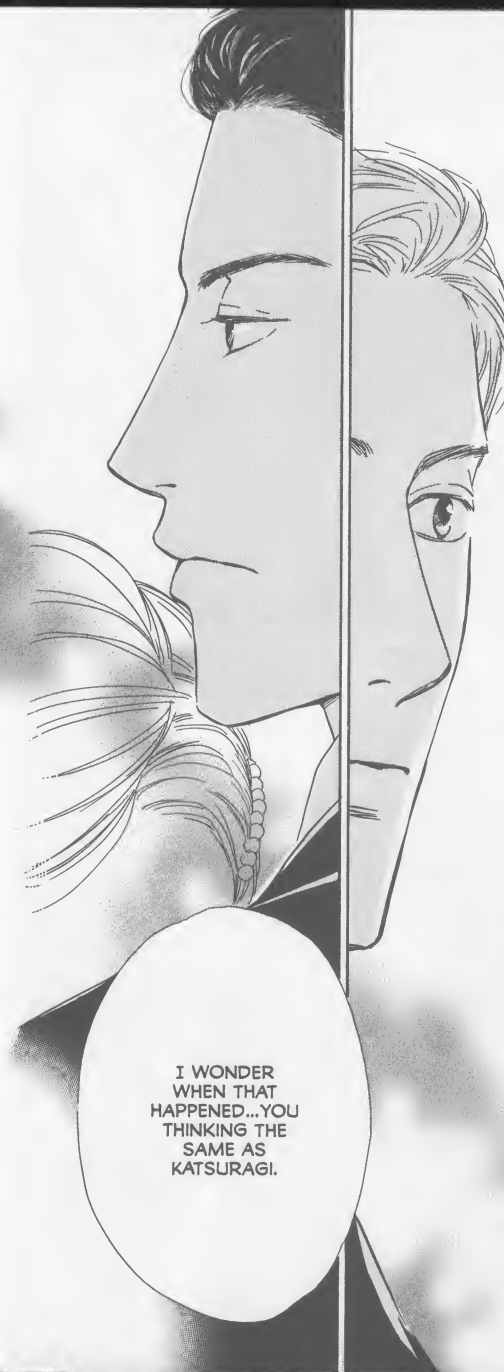
ARE YOU
PERHAPS
TIRED OF
DANCING?



EVEN
NOW, WHILE
WE'RE HERE
DANCING,
THEY
SURROUND
HIM.

HE'S QUITE
REMARKABLE.
THE OTHER MEN
HERE PALE IN
COMPARISON.

YOU MUST
DECIDE ON A
WONDERFUL
YOUNG
WOMAN FOR
HIM SOON.



I WONDER
WHEN THAT
HAPPENED...YOU
THINKING THE
SAME AS
KATSURAGI.



FUNNY...

THAT'S
EXACTLY
WHAT
KATSURAGI
SAID.



ME
NEXT?

IT'S
PROBABLY
BECAUSE
THE
VISCOUNT
IS ALWAYS
KIND TO
EVERYONE
HE
MEETS.

SO ONE
CAN'T
TELL WHO
EXACTLY
IS SPECIAL
TO HIM.



OH
MY!

LORD
KUZE HIDES
NOTHING
FROM YOU,
NOW DOES
HE, MASTER
KATSURAGI?

BUT FOR
ME, HE'S
HARD TO
READ.

I CAN'T
TELL
EITHER.



NOW,
MASTER
KATSU-
RAGI...

...I'D LIKE VERY
MUCH TO DO
WHATEVER I CAN
TO ASSIST YOU. I
BELIEVE THE KUZE
HOUSE HAS QUITE
A BIT TO OFFER.

IF
YOU ARE
SERIOUSLY
CONSIDERING
LORD KUZE'S
MARRIAGE...

THEY
SEND HIM
LETTERS
ONE
AFTER THE
OTHER.

I AM
AWARE
OF
THIS.

AND
THERE ARE A
NUMBER OF
NOBLE LADIES
OF THE RIGHT
AGE AVAILABLE
WHO COULD
BE DEVOTED
TO A YOUNG
VISCOUNT,
STARTING WITH
BARON KASAI'S
DAUGHTER.

SHE'S SAID
FOR QUITE
SOME TIME
NOW THAT
SHE WOULD
LIKE TO SPEAK
WITH LORD
KUZE.

FOR IN-
STANCE,
THE
YOUNG
LADY
FROM
THE SAJO
FAMILY.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THIS REALLY IS QUITE PERFECT.

I DO APOLOGIZE.
I REALLY MUST THINK THINGS OVER.



I SINCERELY APOLOGIZE.
I'M NOT FEELING...
PLEASE EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT.



UH...

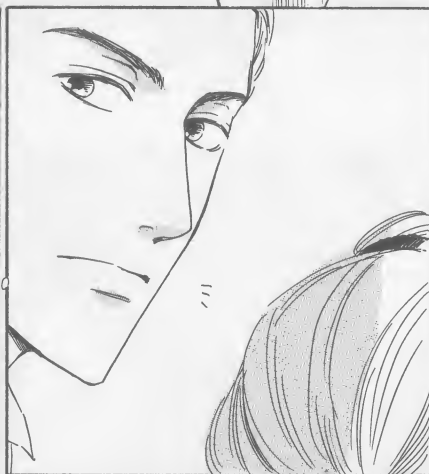


I UNDERSTAND THAT!

CREATING A TIE WITH DUKE SAJO IS REALLY-



KATSURAGI?
WHERE'S HE GOING?



KATSURAGI.



IT'S ALL FOR THE KUZE FAMILY.

I'M SURE YOU'VE ALREADY THOUGHT OF THIS, BUT MAKE SURE YOU PICK MY FIANCEE FROM A FAMILY WHO WILL BE ADVANTAGEOUS FOR MY PROMOTION.



MADAM OKOUCHI.



...NO.



REALLY?

IN THAT CASE, I'LL-

I WOULD LIKE TO MOVE FORWARD WITH YOUR SUGGESTION OF TALKING WITH DUKE SAJO...



A RELATIONSHIP THROUGH MARRIAGE WITH A HOUSE EVEN A LITTLE HIGHER UP WOULD BENEFIT HIS PROMOTION.

I KNOW...
IT'S NOT RIGHT TO CONTINUE ON WITH THIS STRANGE RELATIONSHIP.



ENOUGH.

THAT LOOK. IT'S THE SAME EVERY TIME WE TALK ABOUT MASTER AKIHITO.
IT'S SUCH A DELIGHT FOR ME TO BE ABLE TO SEE ALL THE DIFFERENT EXPRESSIONS FLITTING ACROSS YOUR FACE.



I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF HIM MANIPULATING ME LIKE THIS.



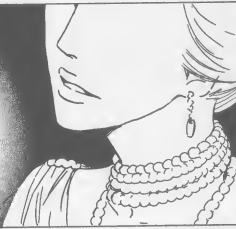
ONCE HE'S MARRIED, HE'LL FORGET ALL ABOUT THESE FICKLE INDULGENCES.

HE'LL MOVE ON QUICKLY.



...WHAT AM I DOING?

THIS IS AMAMIYA'S FAULT. HE'S KNOCKED ME OFF STRIDE.



IF YOU ARE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING LORD KUZE'S MARRIAGE...



THAT'S RIGHT.





KATSURAGI,
I LOVE YOU.

I
REALLY
LOVE
YOU.



...

ONCE HE
HAS AN
HEIR...



KATSURAGI.

...HE'LL SOON
FORGET ALL
HIS PROMISES,
JUST LIKE HIS
PREDECESSOR...



ALL MY
RELATION-
SHIPS
HAVE
BEEN LIKE
THAT.

EVEN
IF YOU ARE
CONNECTED
PHYSICALLY
FOR A
MOMENT,
EVERYTHING
REVERTS TO
NORMAL
SOON
ENOUGH...



KATSURAGI.



KATSURAGI.

DID
SOMETHING
HAPPEN?



Blue Morning: Scene 10





MY LORD, WE'LL TAKE OUR LEAVE OF YOU...

NO, NOT AT ALL...

COME NOW, YOU MUST BE TIRED.

SMILE



I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU FOR A WHILE NOW, LORD AKIHITO. YOU REALLY ARE DIFFERENT FROM LORD AKINAO.

YOUR GAIT, THE WAY YOU TREAT WOMEN...



IT'S ABOUT KATSURAGI.

I HAVE SOMETHING RATHER IMPORTANT TO DISCUSS WITH YOU.

I WONDER IF I COULD TAKE A LITTLE OF YOUR TIME?



VISCOUNT KUZE.

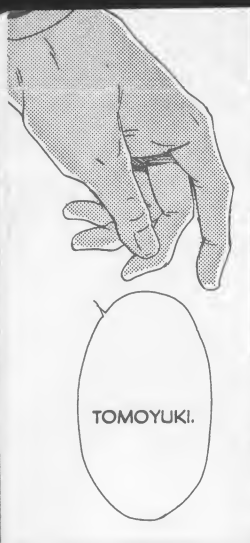


YOU REALLY ARE KIND, MY LORD.

IT MUST BE QUITE EXHAUSTING HAVING TO ENTERTAIN ONE YOUNG LADY AFTER ANOTHER AS YOU DO.



MARQUISE MORIYAMA.

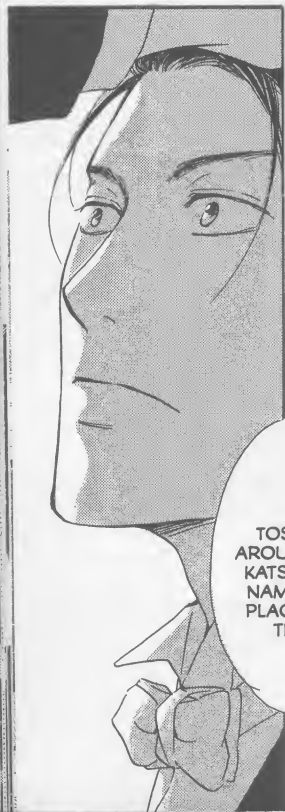


TOMOYUKI.



THAT I
COULD
PRESENT
MYSELF
AS YOUR
REPRE-
SENTATIVE
WOULD
SIMPLY BE
ABSURD.

QUIT
WITH THE
PLEASAN-
TRIES.
THEY'RE
ANNOYING.



WHAT'S
GOING ON
IN THAT
HEAD OF
YOURS?

HAVE YOU
LOST YOUR
DAMN
MIND?

TOSSING
AROUND
THE
KATSURAGI
NAME IN A
PLACE LIKE
THIS!



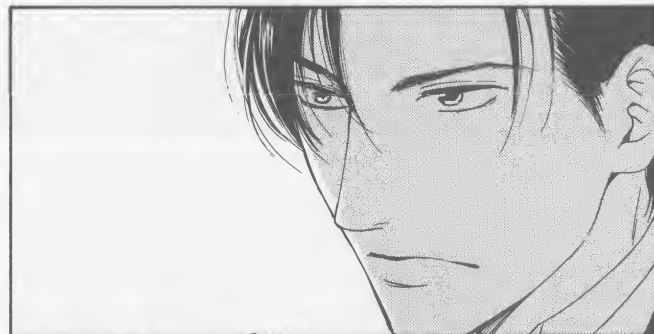
YANK

!

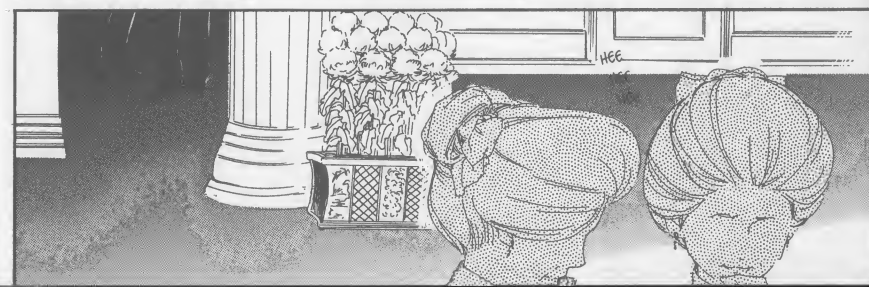


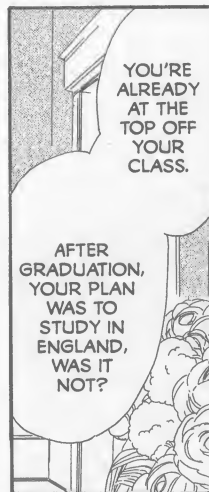
SO YOU
SPOKE TO
MARQUISE
MORIYAMA,
CALLING YOURSELF
THE
REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE
KATSURAGI
FAMILY?

I HAD NO
IDEA THAT
YOU MIGHT
COME THIS
EVENING—



I AM
TRULY
SORRY.





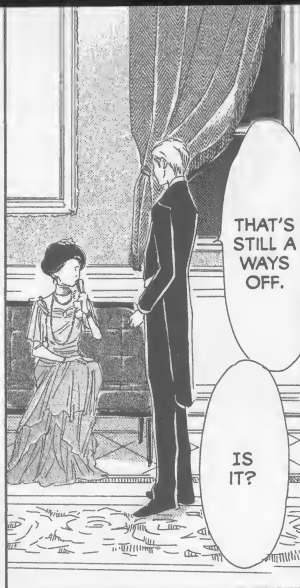
YOU'RE
ALREADY
AT THE
TOP OFF
YOUR
CLASS.

AFTER
GRADUATION,
YOUR PLAN
WAS TO
STUDY IN
ENGLAND,
WAS IT
NOT?



ONCE YOU ARE,
ACCORDING TO
YOUR PREDE-
CESSOR'S WILL,
YOU WILL BE OF
AGE TO INHERIT
THE ENTIRE
KUZE ESTATE.

YOU'LL
BE
TWENTY
IN THE
BLINK OF
AN EYE.



THAT'S
STILL A
WAYS
OFF.

IS
IT?



...I'M SURE
KATSURAGI
WILL HAVE
FOUND YOU
A MOST
SUITABLE
PARTNER.

IN ABOUT
THREE, MAYBE
FOUR YEARS,
YOU'LL
RETURN TO
JAPAN. AT
ANY RATE,
BEFORE THAT
HAPPENS...



BUT...
ISN'T
IT
ABOUT
TIME?



YOU
REALLY
ARE
FORTUNATE,
MY
LORD!

HAVING A
MAN LIKE
KATSURAGI
ALL TO
YOURSELF.



SHE HAS
PARTICULARLY
DEEP TIES TO
THE MOST
PRESTIGIOUS
NOBLE
FAMILIES.



THE
BARONESS
LOVES
ABOVE ALL
ELSE TO
PLAY
MATCH-
MAKER.



ONCE
IT IS
DECIDED
THAT
YOU
ARE TO
BE MAR-
RIED...

...I'LL BE
ACTING
AS YOUR
GO-
BETWEEN.

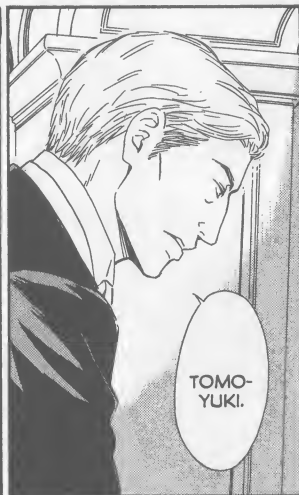
WHAT ARE
YOU TRYING
TO SAY, MY
LADY?





WHY DID YOU INTERFERE WITH KANEMOTO SPINNING?

I'M SURE YOU INTENDED TO HIDE BEHIND THE BROKER, BUT YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT.



TOMO-YUKI.



...



"BOTH HOUSES ARE TO HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO CONTACT."

HA HA HA



I KEPT TO HIS WORDS.



YOU HAVE OBEYED THE LAST WORDS OF THE FORMER VISCOUNT, HAVEN'T YOU?



LORD AKIHITO.

PERHAPS NOW'S THE TIME FOR YOU TO CONSIDER SENDING KATSURAGI AWAY FROM THE KUZE HOUSE.



AND HOW IS FATHER?

POORLY.

A MERE SHADOW OF HIMSELF.





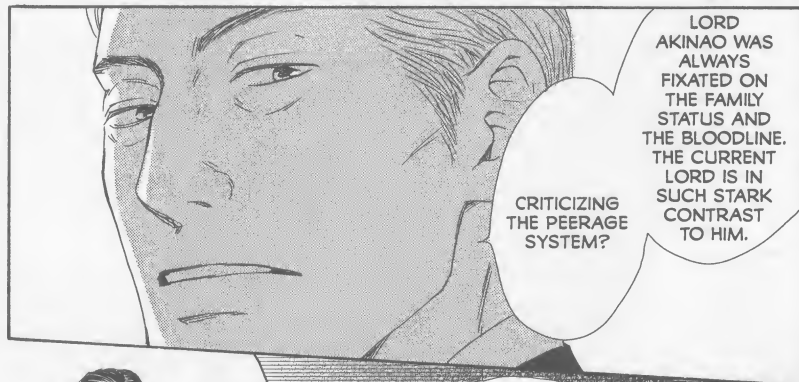
THE
VIS-
COUNT
KUZE.

THAT
CHILD IS
NOTHING
LIKE HIS
PREDECES-
SOR.



...
HMPH.

ARE YOU
REALLY SO
DISPLEASED
THAT HE MET
WITH ME
WITHOUT
TELLING
YOU?



CRITICIZING
THE PEERAGE
SYSTEM?

LORD
AKINAO WAS
ALWAYS
FIXATED ON
THE FAMILY
STATUS AND
THE BLOODLINE.
THE CURRENT
LORD IS IN
SUCH STARK
CONTRAST
TO HIM.



JUST
WHAT WERE
YOU THINKING
RAISING THAT
BOY?



MORE
IMPORTANTLY...
YOU MET
WITH MASTER
AKIHITO
DIRECTLY.



THAT WAS
MERELY A
FAVOR.

I
HIGHLY
DOUBT
THAT.



BY HIS
INVITATION.

THEN
YOU
SHOULD
HAVE
REFUSED!



YOU WERE
THE ONE
TO FIRST
MAKE LIGHT
OF THAT
PROMISE.

UNDER
THE PRETEXT
OF BRINGING
MASTER ISHIZAKI
TO THE HOUSE,
YOU BOLDLY
ENTERED THE
MANOR
GROUNDS.



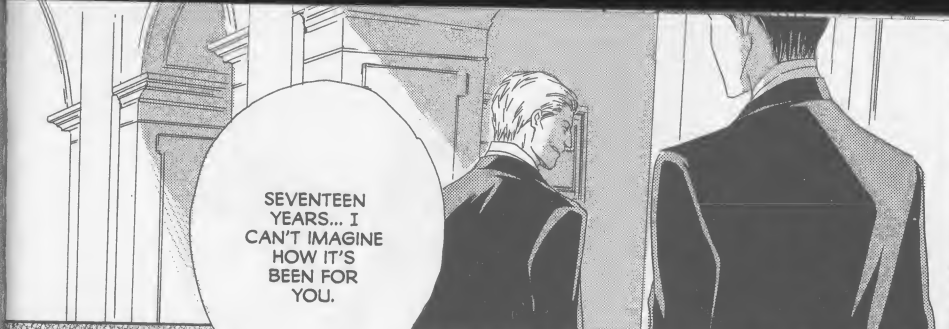
...I WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF YOU STAYED AWAY FROM THE KUZE HOUSE AS YOU WERE ORDERED TO BY THE FORMER VISCOUNT, MASTER AKINAO.

IF YOU DON'T WISH TO SEE FURTHER SERIOUS LOSSES IN THE STOCK MARKET... THEN...



EXCUSE ME?

I'M TELLING YOU TO PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR PLACE AS THE *SOCIAL INFERIOR* IN THIS SITUATION.



SEVENTEEN YEARS... I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW IT'S BEEN FOR YOU.



THE "KUZE HOUSE" ?

YOU ARE A KATSURAGI, ARE YOU NOT?

THE KUZE HOUSE IS NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.

UNTIL MY MASTER COMES OF AGE, I AM HIS PROXY.

I AM THE BUTLER FOR THE KUZE HOUSE.



IS THAT CLEAR?



...BUT YOU CANNOT HAVE THAT MAN. THE KUZES AND THE KATSURAGIS ARE BOUND BY THE OLD SAMURAI CODES.

PEOPLE LIKE US, WE CAN TOY AROUND WITH SOMEONE FROM A MERCHANT FAMILY, PERHAPS...



HE WILL ALWAYS BE A MAN BOUND BY DUTY.

NO MATTER HOW MANY YEARS PASS, KATSURAGI WILL DO AS LORD AKINAO INSTRUCTED.



YOU HAVE DIFFERENT IDEAS THAN THE OLD-FASHIONED WAYS OF YOUR PREDECESSOR, DON'T YOU?

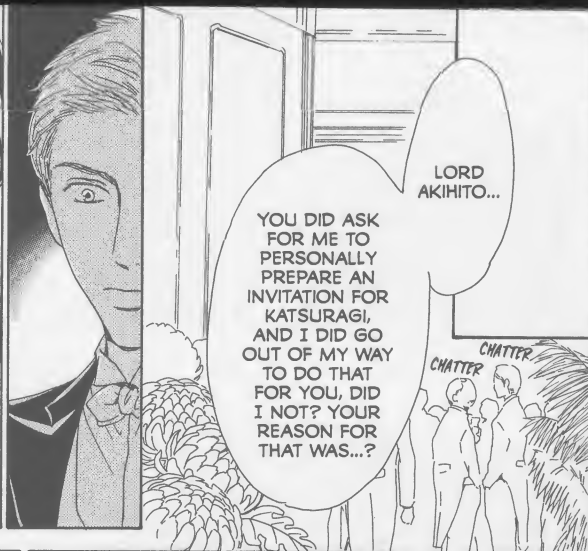


BUT YOU'RE DIFFERENT.



...I WANTED TO COME WITH HIM TONIGHT.

LORD AKIHITO?



YOU DID ASK FOR ME TO PERSONALLY PREPARE AN INVITATION FOR KATSURAGI, AND I DID GO OUT OF MY WAY TO DO THAT FOR YOU, DID I NOT? YOUR REASON FOR THAT WAS...?

LORD AKIHITO...



THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE AS LONG AS HE CONTINUES TO SERVE AS THE KUZE BUTLER.

KATSURAGI WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO WALK BEHIND YOU HIS ENTIRE LIFE.



I WANTED TO WALK SIDE BY SIDE WITH KATSURAGI.



ONCE HE'S
MADE UP HIS
MIND ABOUT
SOMETHING, HE
WON'T WAVER
EVEN FOR A
SECOND.

HE'S
STUBBORN,
OBSTINATE...

THAT'S
WHY
WE...



NO.

PLEASE
EXCUSE
ME.



IF YOU REALLY
WANT TO STAND
SIDE BY SIDE
WITH KATSURAGI,
YOU HAVE NO
CHOICE BUT TO
RELEASE HIM
FROM THE KUZE
HOUSE.

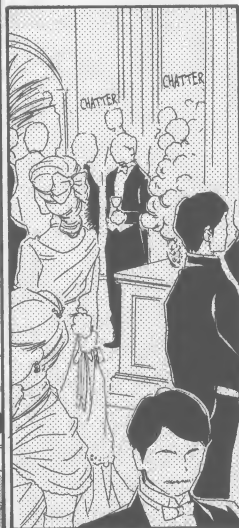


WHATEVER
HAPPENS,
KATSURAGI
WILL NOT
CHANGE.

IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE.
YOU KNOW
HIM AS WELL
AS I DO,
DON'T YOU,
MY LADY?



KATSU-
RAGI.
WHERE
ARE
YOU?



THE WAY YOUR
PREDECESSOR
WANTED.

I WANT TO
SEE YOU
PROMOTED.



MASTER
AKIHITO.



...YOUR
PREDECESSOR
ORDERED ME
TO.

THE WAY...



WAIT,
THAT'S...



ALWAYS
TREATING US
LIKE VASSALS
DESPITE THE FACT
THAT THE SYSTEM
HAS CHANGED
SINCE THE
RESTORATION.

I'VE BEEN
ANNOYED
WITH THE
KUZE
FAMILY FOR
SOME TIME
NOW.





SOMEONE
LIKE YOU
HAS NO
RIGHT TO
CALL *ME*
INFERIOR!

CLENCH



YOU'RE
NOT EVEN
FATHER'S
BASTARD
CHILD...

YOU DON'T
HAVE A SINGLE
DROP OF
KATSURAGI
BLOOD IN YOU,
MUCH LESS
KUZE!

LISTEN
CLOSELY...



HIS
HEIR
WAS
BORN
SOON
AFTER.

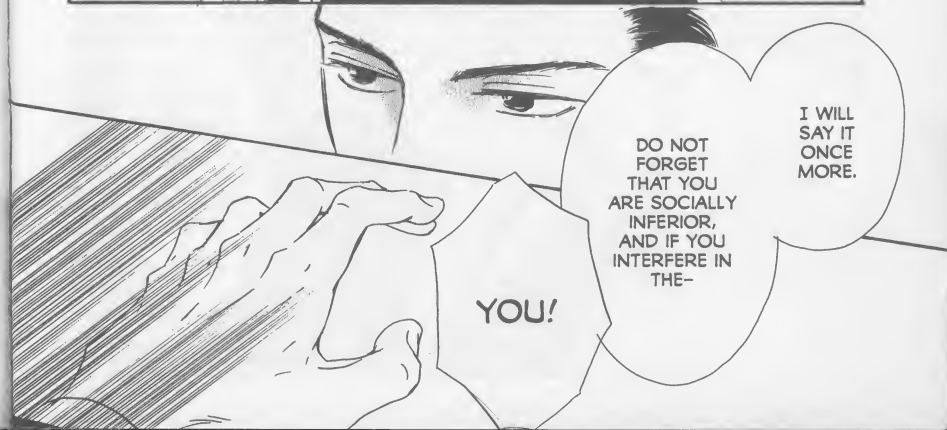
I THOUGHT
THAT THE
SITUATION
MIGHT
CHANGE A
LITTLE ONCE
YOU WENT
TO THE
KUZES...

FATHER
ALWAYS
BOWING HIS
FOREHEAD
TO THE
FLOOR,
PRAISING
THE OLD
VISCOUNT.



AND
THERE'S NO
NEED FOR
MASTER
AKIHITO TO
LEARN OF IT,
EITHER.

MASTER
AKIHITO HAS
NOTHING
TO DO WITH
THE HISTORY
BEHIND MY
ENTERING
THE KUZE
HOUSEHOLD.



YOU!

DO NOT
FORGET
THAT YOU
ARE SOCIALLY
INFERIOR,
AND IF YOU
INTERFERE IN
THE-

I WILL
SAY IT
ONCE
MORE.



YOU KNEW
EVERYTHING...

...AND YET
YOU HAD
THE NERVE
TO INSTALL
YOURSELF
AS THE HEIR
TO THE KUZE
HOUSE?!

YOU KNEW,
AND YET
YOU STILL
TAKE THAT
ATTITUDE
TOWARD
ME?!



I WOULD
LIKE TO
KNOW
AT LEAST
THAT MUCH
ABOUT
MYSELF.

DID OUR
FATHER...DID
KATSURAGI...
GO SO FAR AS
TO TELL YOU
ABOUT MY
REAL
PARENTS?

BROTHER.



...
WHAT'S
THAT
LOOK
FOR?

WHY ARE
YOU SO
CALM?



YOU
COULDN'T
HAVE
ALREADY
KNOWN?!

YOU...

GRAB

KAY
KAY

...IS NOT
A PLACE
WHERE A
MAN WHO
DOESN'T
EVEN KNOW
HIS OWN
ORIGINS
CAN JUST
PRESENT
HIMSELF!

A WHORE'S
SON LIKE YOU
HAS NO RIGHT
TO CALL ME
BROTHER—



OR...

...IS HE
ALREADY
IN SUCH A
STATE OF
DECLINE
THAT HIS
MEMORY
IS—



LISTEN.

A
PLACE
LIKE
THIS...



JUST HOW
SHAMELESS
ARE YOU?

IT'S
BECAUSE I
THOUGHT
YOU KNEW
NOTHING
OF THIS
THAT I'VE
TREATED
YOU AS MY
BROTHER—



SHUT
YOUR
MOUTH!

TAKAYUKI
KATSURAGI!!

YANK

PFFT

HOW
STRANGE.

FOR YOU TO
BRING A MERE
SERVANT TO
A PLACE LIKE
THIS IS-

TAKE
YOUR
HANDS
OFF OF
HIM!

I SAID
TAKE
YOUR
HANDS
OFF OF
HIM.

KNOW
YOUR
PLACE.

AND
NOW
HE'S THE
KUZE
BUTLER.

YOU
WILL NOT
TOUCH A
MEMBER
OF MY
HOUSE-
HOLD.

...
HE'S
MY
BRO-
THER.

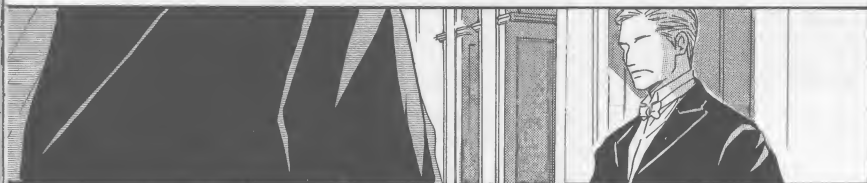


GRAB

KATSU-
RAGI!

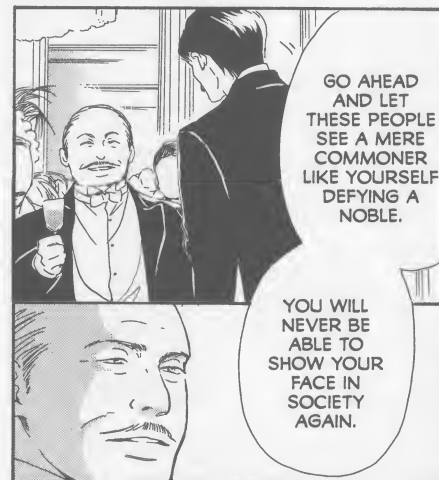
WE'RE
LEAVING.

LET'S
GO.



HE'S
CERTAINLY
VERY
DIFFERENT
THAN HE
USED TO
BE...

THAT
BOY...



GO AHEAD
AND LET
THESE PEOPLE
SEE A MERE
COMMONER
LIKE YOURSELF
DEFYING A
NOBLE.

YOU WILL
NEVER BE
ABLE TO
SHOW YOUR
FACE IN
SOCIETY
AGAIN.



NEARLY
ALL OF THE
GUESTS
HERE ARE
TITLED
NOBILITY.
EACH AND
EVERY ONE
OF THEM
IS QUITE
PARTICULAR
ABOUT THAT
STATUS.

MARQUISE
MORIYAMA HAS
PERSONALLY
BEEN INVOLVED
WITH THE
REFORM OF
THE PEERAGE
LAW.



THE MASTER
OF THE ISHIZAKI
HOUSE WILL DO
ANYTHING I
ASK OF HIM.

OR PERHAPS
I SHOULD
JUST ASK
ISHIZAKI TO
RUIN YOUR
BANK.



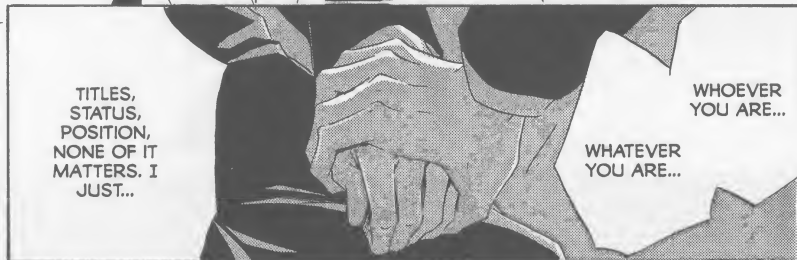
IT
DOESN'T
MATTER TO
ME!

I'VE
SAID
IT SO
MANY TIMES!

I-

B
A
M

I SAID
THAT
DOESN'T
MATTER,
DIDN'T I?!



TITLES,
STATUS,
POSITION,
NONE OF IT
MATTERS. I
JUST...

WHOEVER
YOU ARE...

WHATEVER
YOU ARE...



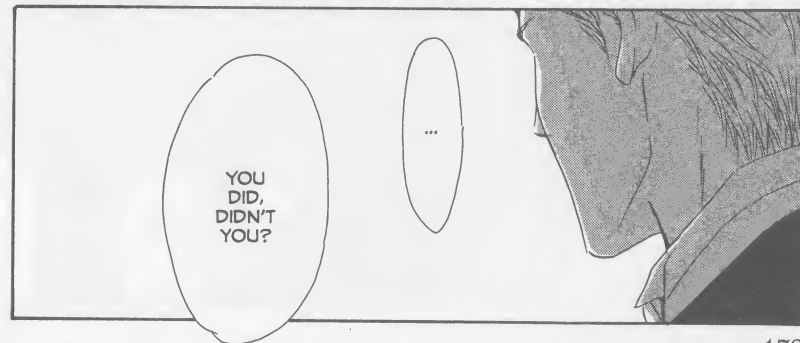
HOW
MANY
TIMES DO
I HAVE TO
SAY IT?

I JUST
WANT TO
BE WITH
YOU.



MASTER
AKIHITO.

DID YOU
HEAR WHAT
WE WERE
TALKING
ABOUT
BEFORE?



YOU
DID,
DIDN'T
YOU?

...



THE SAJO
FAMILY IS
THE NOBLEST
OF THE
PEERAGE.



I-
AS YOU
WELL
KNOW,
MASTER
AKIHITO.



YOU
DON'T
HAVE
ANYTHING
TO SAY
OTHER
THAN
THAT?



...

SAY
SOME-
THING.



YOU'RE
INCREDIBLE.



...

DUKE SAJO'S
DAUGHTER
SAYS THAT SHE
WISHES TO
MEET YOU.



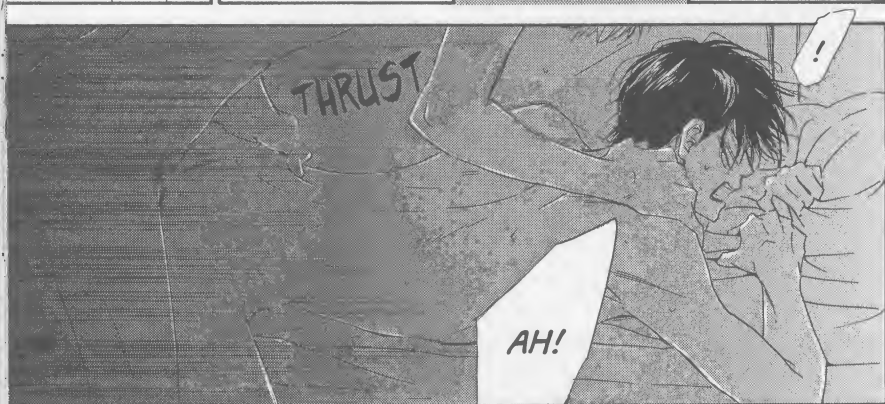
NO MATTER
WHAT
HAPPENS...

...YOU
ABSOLUTELY
NEVER
CHANGE.



THE ONE
WHO
HAS TO
CHANGE
THEN...

...IS
ME,
ISN'T
IT?





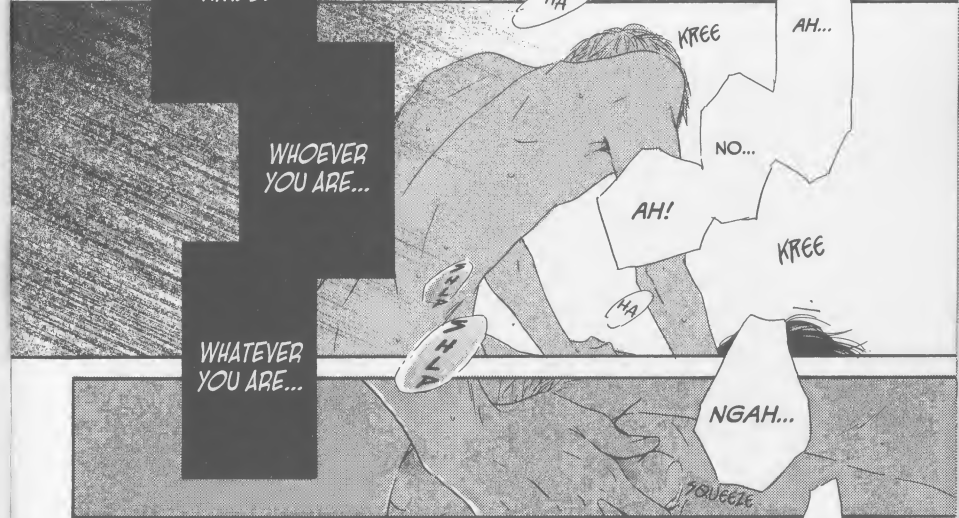
NONE
OF THAT
MATTERS.



I'VE SAID
IT SO
MANY
TIMES.

WHOEVER
YOU ARE...

WHATEVER
YOU ARE...





I
JUST...

HA

HA

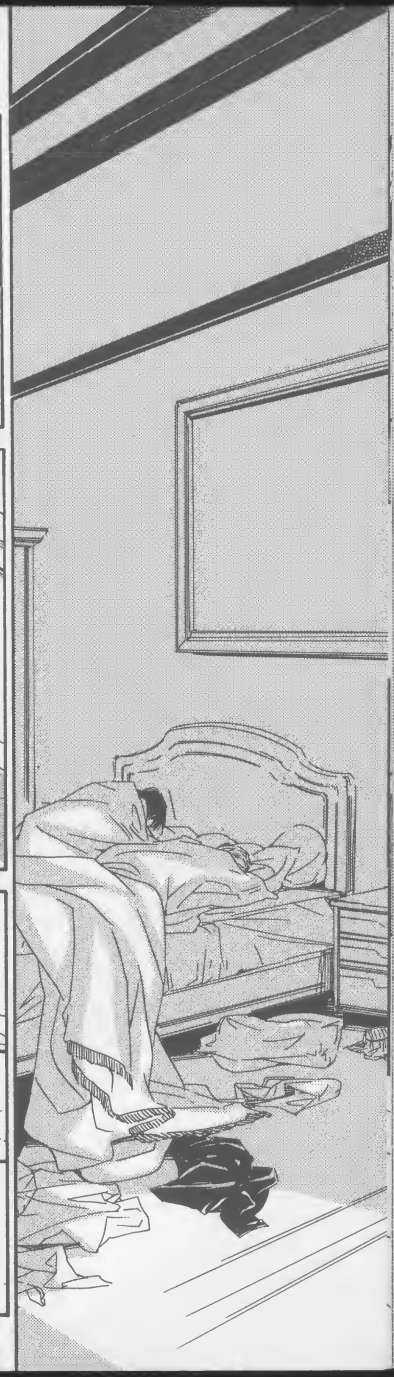
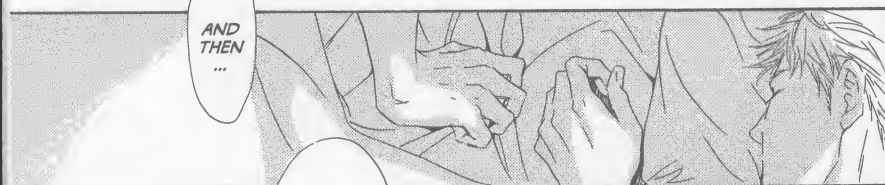
HA

HE'S SO
WARM...

oo

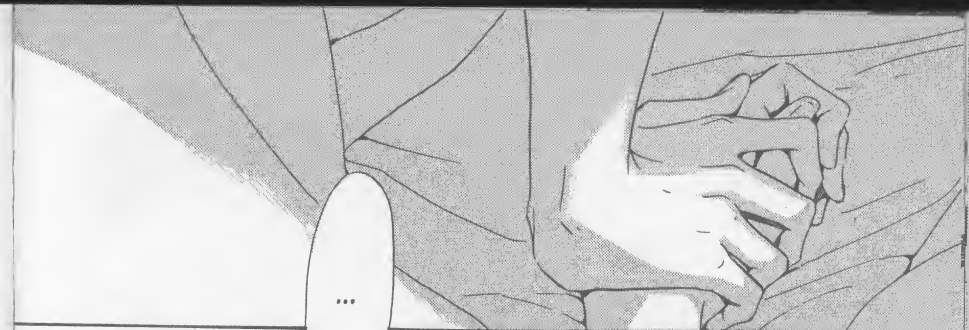
HA

...WANT TO
BE WITH
YOU.



IT SEEMS WE'VE MANAGED TO GET THE SECOND VOLUME OUT SAFELY. THANK GOODNESS... THIS TIME (JUST LIKE LAST TIME) THERE WERE TOO MANY CORRECTIONS AND REVISIONS TO MAKE, MEANING I GAVE MY EDITOR TOO MANY HEADACHES. SORRY... I'LL KEEP WORKING HARD FOR THE THIRD VOLUME, SO PLEASE JOIN ME IF YOU GET THE CHANCE.

SEE YOU! SHOKO HIDAKA, JUNE 2010



...

MASTER
AKIHITO.



Scene 10 END

“

The second
volume is out! I
hope you manage
to enjoy it, if only
just a little!

”

About the Author

Shoko Hidaka's works have been published in English, French and German.

Her previously published English-language releases include *Restart* and *Not Enough Time*. Born on March 31st in Tokyo, she's an Aries with blood type A.